

# 36 FACES

The History, Astrology and Magic of the Decans



Austin Coppock

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WITH ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOB EAMES



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# Part I:

# HISTORY

## INTRODUCTION

THERE is a thread that runs through over four millennia of astrological and magical history, a cord that binds ancient Egypt with the Hellenistic world, the Arabic empire, India, the European Renaissance and even touches the present. That thread is the Decans.

The decans are, physically, a division of the earth's sky into 36 sections. Yet these 36 faces of heaven are more than just a curious footnote in the history of archaeo-astronomy. This particular division first emerged in ancient Egypt, but moved with the corpus of Hermetic material, reincarnating itself in culture after culture.

Ostensibly a gear in astrology's encompassing clockworks, the decans have also long been a key to accessing legions of spirits. For several millennia and in multiple cultures, magicians have looked at these 36 faces and seen gaggles of gods, choirs of angels, hordes of demons, and a host of other spirits staring back at them. Far from going undocumented, this gallery of faces has been painted and drawn by a host of sorcerers and artists, and can



be found on walls of the Sistine chapel as well as in the pages of grimoires.

Weaving together astrology and magic, divination and sorcery, time and sky, this thread of esoteric history deserves more than a footnote. The purpose of this section is to outline the trajectory of the decans through time and culture, and thus come to understand the themes present as well as the range of uses they have been put to.

What follows is not an exhaustive history, as such a project would, by its nature, include a vast pile of minutiae without value to the practitioner. An attempt in this section has been made to blend story-telling and scholarship, the extremes of each were necessarily omitted in order to find what is, hopefully, a pleasing middle ground. It is therefore inevitable that the section which follows will be too dry for some and entirely too moist for others. Those who had hoped for a rollicking tale have my apologies, as do those whose hearts were set on a doctoral thesis.

Some may find it tempting to sort through this winding history in search of the “real” decans. Some might assume that their Egyptian forms, being the oldest, are the “best” or most authentic. Others might assume that the material evolved over time, and reached an entirely superior form later.

Any attempt to find the “real” decans misses a most important point. The decans were real in every historical and cultural chapter. They opened windows through which divinatory visions emerged, accompanied by a host of cheerful and terrifying spirits. To pick one moment in the given timeline is akin to picking one moment in a man’s life story and declaring it to be the “real” one. It is all real, and taken together the whole story offers lessons which no piece in isolation could possibly teach.



# Chapter 1: Ancient Egypt

## *THE BODY OF NUT*

THE decans' beginning is hidden amidst the shifting sands and lush riverbanks of ancient Egypt. Discovered in the tombs of pharaohs dating back into the early 3<sup>rd</sup> millennia BC, this calendar—this wheel of small gods—was as ancient to the classical Romans as the Romans are to us today. What we now call the decans were the backbone of Egyptian time-keeping, both sacred and profane, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennia BC until the conquest by Alexander in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. The most conservative estimate gives this calendar an 1800 year lifespan, dwarfing the mere four and a half centuries the modern Gregorian calendar has been in use, and exceeding even the much older Julian calendar, which codified time in much of Europe for more than a millennia and a half. The decans, far from the exotic set of images they would one day become, represented the fundamental structure of time for one of the Earth's great civilizations for nearly two millennia.

The decans were first and foremost a division of Solar time. From the Sun we first received day and night and then later, after countless generations, the year itself. We have grown up amongst the spokes of the year's great wheel, and could scarcely forget what has been encoded into us since we learned to count. It is hard not to take for granted. Yet solar time is a result of complex measurements, the majority of which are incomprehensible to the average citizen. Solar time was not the first time, and to understand what meaning a solar calendar has, we must first understand what preceded it.

Our first time-awareness was inarguably the bifurcation of experience into day and night. There are no stories of the discovery of day and night, only myths—their division is everywhere the act of immortal creators, those who cleaved shapeless chaos into light and darkness.

After day and night came lunar time. The Moon offers a consistent, observable cycle, thickening and thinning reliably. Having the aid of numbers, it is as simple as counting the day and nights between Full Moons to observe this cycle. These simple but fundamental mathematics were performed so long ago that they, too, are rarely credited as the invention of one man or another. In ancient Egyptian lore, this discovery is credited to Thoth, the Ibis and baboon headed god of writing, mathematics and magic, lord of the heart and the tongue.

The leap from the lunar month to the solar year is not a simple one. Unlike the relatively simple matter of numbering days between Full Moons, the cycle of the year is elusive. One cannot count lunar cycles and hope to capture the sun. The visible lunar cycle of 29.3 days does not fit into the 365.25 days of the solar year. Much to the chagrin of calendar crafters, the lunar cycle falls nearly 10 days short. To bridge the gap between the solar year and the lunar month, a number of cultures, among them the Chinese, Arabian and Hindu, utilized the intercalary or “leap” months, an awkward system which added an extra month to the calendar every three years.

In many cultures, the Sun’s cycle was first measured at the periphery of the historical record. For the Egyptians, it was sometime in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> millennia. This is where the decans first appear, as a division of the year into 36 distinct sections, each with its own associated characteristics and gods.

Yet what is interesting about the decanic division into 36 is that it addresses not just the year, the large wheel of solar time, but also the day—the small wheel whose rotation we are constantly privy to. Each of these cycles is cut to 36 by means of marker stars. The rising of each one of these stars in the night sky marked the beginning of a new hour. The decans, and the stars which marked them, were thus a type of stellar clock, allowing the ancient Egyptians to divide the night. This is a significant innovation, for the observant have long used the angle and length of shadows to measure the day, but night offers no such conveniences.

The same stars were used to divide the year. As the Sun makes his yearly progression along the path of the ecliptic, different stars will arise first. The rising of the same decanic stars which divided the day thus also cut the year into 36, making for 36 roughly 10 day weeks.

The cycle of light and darkness which bound the day also bound the year, and the same wheel of gods was used to understand the meaning of its phases. It is likely that the division of the year was an application of the older

understanding of the division of night and day to the more recent, though still ancient, calculation of the solar cycle. The root of the decans' meaning is deep in the ever-churned circle of light and darkness experienced daily and yearly.

The first evidence of the decans is deep inside the most ancient pyramids, carved into coffin lids, in the burial chambers of kings in the 21<sup>st</sup> century BCE. The decans exist here as part of elaborate magical inscriptions used to ensure a proper passing of the Pharaoh into the next world—Amenta. Though the coffin texts are the first archeological evidence of the decans, it is unlikely that this is the point at which they were introduced, as they are already so interwoven in the cultural fabric that the pharaoh—a son of Ra himself, needed to invoke their aid in order pass into his proper place in the next world. They had importance not only during life, but in death as well.

Like many things in ancient Egyptian culture, the importance of the calendar was two fold, having both an earthly and a spiritual meaning. The earthly aspect of the decans is easy to quantify. The year was divided into 36 sections of 10 days each—not unlike weeks.  $36 \times 10$  produces 360, which enclosed the year in a perfect circle. Yet while geometry is everywhere in nature, little of it is perfect. There is a perversity to the created world which everywhere resists completion subjugation to mathematical ideals. And so there are 365 days in a solar year, or rather, 365.25, as nature is rarely cooperative enough even to yield a round number.

The ancient Egyptians accounted for this divergence in an interesting way. The 36 weeks of 10 days apiece were part of standard time, but the 5 extra days stood outside of this perfect circle. These intercalary days separated the new year from the old, and each was sacred to one of five great gods.

According to myth, Nut, the goddess of the night sky, was barren during the five extra days. Thoth, the Ibis-headed magician god, in order to remedy the infertility, decided to gamble with Khonsu, the Moon god. Khonsu bet  $1/72$  of his yearly light, or five days, with Thoth and lost. Thoth took those days and gave them to Nut, who was fecundated and gave birth to five children in five days. Thus came Horus the Elder, Osiris, Set, Isis, and Nephthys, the five deities celebrated during the intercalary days.

Designating the gap between the old year and the new as sacred is not unique to the Egyptians, as a number of different cultures consider these liminal days as being outside of time. Customs such as *Misrule* and *Saturnalia* emphasize the otherness of these times with a ritualized inversion of social



roles. For the ancient Egyptians, it was a time owned by the gods, even more so than the rest of the year.

The decans thus represented the structure of cyclical time, what was, metaphorically, within the circle. Each of the 36 phases was connected to the type of events that regularly occurred during that period of the year. These yearly events, most importantly the flooding of the Nile, were all seen as the mundane mirror of what was occurring in the divine realm above. Thus, although they were associated with cycles of activity on earth, the decans are not represented by pictographs of terrestrial phenomenon, such as birds migrating or snakes hatching, but as the divine force which set all these things in motion. The decans are thus represented uniformly by the gods, in their different forms and travels.

The presence of these gods in the decans was not mutely observed, but actively evoked and sometimes celebrated. The series of gods attributed to the decans are mentioned in records of funerary practices, and also used to time a variety of holy days. Though currently contended within Egyptological circles, it is also hypothesized that certain planets enjoyed an especial potency when passing through specific decans, a strong precedent for the fundamental astrological concept of planetary dignity.

Though the power behind the decanic division of time into 36 is represented by gods, there is a diversity of opinion as to which spirits presided over each decan. Multiple lists exist over a period of more than two millennia. The reason for this variety is no doubt a pair of fatal flaws in the otherwise elegant reckoning of time.

The divisions of the year were calculated by means of a set of fixed stars, which could be relied upon to rise at the same time each year. Although not visible over the span of a year, or even that of a human life, there exists a slippage between the solar year and the sphere of the fixed stars. This phenomenon, called precession, sees the stars shift  $1/72$  of a degree each year. These mathematical degrees translate loosely to one day of the solar cycle. While this only equated to a change of roughly 20 minutes each year, after 720 years, each week begins nearly 10 days later. If ancient Egypt did not endure so long, this would not have presented an issue, but by 15<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the decanic stars rose a full 10 days later than they had at the time the coffin texts were written.

The other crack in ancient Egyptian calendrics was that the year was allotted 365 days, meaning that a quarter of a day was lost every year, a dra-

matic slippage of a whole day every four years.

As a result of these issues, the calendar was revised numerous times. The stars which anchored the decans changed over and over again, as they lost their value as accurate markers after a handful of generations. At the present, more than 50 different lists of decans have been recovered, divided into five different families of tables. This has, unsurprisingly, led to great confusion in attempts to reconstruct the decans and the stars to which they were assigned.

While there are aspects of the decanic legacy which are impossibly confused, the idea of a division of solar time into 36 and the presence of great spirits within those divisions was transmitted forcefully to those cultures which succeeded the ancient Egyptians. So powerful was this strange inheritance that the decans, long after they were abandoned as a popular method of reckoning time, persist in astrological and magical lore up to the present day, more than four millennia after the first evidence of their use.



## Chapter 2: The Hellenistic Era

*PLANETS, GODS, DEMONS AND DAIMONES*

EGYPT endured for thousands of years. Invaders came and went, but the cultural core of ancient Egypt remained intact for aeons. The Alexandrian conquest of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE changed that. Although his personal claim on the land barely lasted a decade, Alexander's conquest changed the trajectory of all parts of Egyptian culture, the decanic calendar among them.

Between 327-325 BCE, Alexander of Macedon conquered Greece, the Near East and Egypt. Though his mortal frame lasted little longer than his wars, this forceful unification of Eastern Mediterranean cultures forged a cultural sphere which lasted for nearly a millenium. Politically, the world that Alexander forged fragmented shortly after his death, as his generals squabbled amongst themselves and shed blood for the right to rule. Yet this small club of conquerors had something in common. They were all culturally Greek, and spoke its language. Thus, although politically divided, the entirety of these lands were ruled by those fluent in the Greek language and culture. It is because of the hegemony of Greek culture that this historical period is referred to as Hellenistic, which refers to the Greek Goddess "Hellas," who, according to legend, all Greeks were descended from.

This strange new world united the Greek cultural sphere with that of ancient Egypt, as well as that of Persia and what remained of Babylon. Goods, services and ideas moved with unprecedented freedom across trade routes and tongues in the Eastern Mediterranean. One result of this was the diffusion of Egyptian ideas and their fusion with others which roved the Hellenistic world.

## PTOLEMAIC EGYPT

SHORTLY after Alexander's conquest, one of his most trusted generals, Ptolemy, was appointed satrap, or governor, of Egypt. Approximately 20 years later, he appointed himself King Ptolemy the First, taking on the name of Ptolemy *Soter*, or "savior," beginning a dynasty that would endure until the suicide of Cleopatra nearly three centuries later.

The Greek Ptolemy dynasty did not remain strictly Greek for long. They adopted Egyptian customs and conventions quickly and were conversely recognized by the Egyptians as successors to the pharaohs. This created an unprecedented *mélange* of Egyptian and classical Greek culture, often referred to as Greco-Egyptian.

Alexandria was the furnace in which these alchemical changes took place. Founded by Alexander in the midst of his conquest in 331 BCE, Alexandria served as Ptolemaic Egypt's political capitol and an international cultural center. It hosted the famous Library of Alexandria, whose destruction is lamented to this day. Here were housed documents from throughout the known world. Prayers to Horus and the works of Plato shared shelves with the *Enuma Elish* and records of Babylonian planetary divinations.

The effect that this collision and merger of cultural spheres had on all of the arts and sciences can hardly be underestimated. However, within this book, there is little time to trace the entirety of it. We will thus follow the thread which we entered this maze holding—the decans.

## ASTROLOGY'S NATIVITY

IT was in the midst of this tumult of cultural forces and mixture of traditions that a recognizable astrology first emerged. Several of the cultures that contributed to its complex make up had systems of astral lore, but in the first century BCE, astrology emerged having nearly all of the features it has today. The meanings of the planets, signs, aspects and houses established during this period remained the norm for more than 2000 years.

Though the texts are uniformly Greek, Hellenistic astrology, as it is called, was not a exclusively Greek construct, but an ambitious synthesis of Greek, Babylonian and Egyptian celestial lore. It was here that the decans were locked into the form that they would occupy in the West for more than two

millennia.

The essence of the decans—36 meaningful phases of time and sky, repeated cyclically—did not change. What did change is what this wheel of 36 was anchored to. Though the lists had changed over time, it was stars to which the decans were pinned during the entirety of the Egyptian phase. This system certainly had its virtues, perhaps the most practical being that the night sky itself served as an accurate clock. Yet this dependence upon visual stellar phenomenon was also its downfall, for as the stars precessed, they become an increasingly less accurate indicator for the portion of the solar year. As discussed in the last chapter, this led to a number of revised star lists, as the indicating stars had to be changed every couple hundred years. For a system which spanned two millennia, this meant a host of revisions and competing star lists.

In Hellenistic astrology, the decans were pried loose from the star-scarred flesh of Nut, and pinned to the mathematically regular, 360 degree zodiac. Each decan was given 10 degrees, as they once owned 10 days. It is each decan's ownership of 10 degrees of the zodiac which lends them their name in ancient Greek—"dekanoi," from which "decans" comes. The root, "deka-" refers to 10, and is present in such words as "decade," a grouping of 10 years, and "decimate," which means to kill every 10<sup>th</sup> person of a given group. The inclusion of 3 decans into each 30 degree sign allowed for easy synthesis of the 12 sign zodiac and 36 image decanic calendar.

This zodiac, today referred to as the Tropical zodiac, is a division of the Sun-Earth cycle by 12. Anchored to the sturdy cross of the Equinoxes and Solstices, the advantage of this circle of animals is that it does not precess, or drift with time. Though possessed of this obvious virtue, problems accompany this schematization of the heavens, as well. Though the 12 signs of the tropical zodiac have no stellar anchors, they are named for the 12 zodiacal constellations on the ecliptic. This doubling of names has sowed confusion throughout astrology's history, and is, to this day, the thrust of ill-informed attempts to debunk astrology.

The originators of this system experienced few, if any, of the complexities that came with the split between a stellar, or sidereal zodiac, and a tropical one. The difference between these two zodiacs was minimal during the period when Hellenistic Astrology thrived, between the first century BCE and the fourth century CE. A discrepancy of a few degrees made little difference in most calculations. Since then, however, the difference between sidereal

and tropical zodiacs has grown to nearly 27 degrees, enough to change the sign in which the majority of planets are placed. This split between those astrologers using tropical and sidereal zodiacs also came to be the defining difference between Hindu, or Vedic, astrology and what is called the "Western" tradition, which passed from the Middle East to Western Europe in the 12<sup>th</sup> century CE. Yet these thorny issues were half a millennia away from the creators of Hellenistic astrology.

#### DIFFERENCES IN USE

IN addition to the manner in which they were calculated in Hellenistic astrology, the decans were also used very differently. In the ancient Egyptian system, each Decan represented a period of time where a particular god's influence was greatest. Thus the meaning of each decan was filled out by the power of that god. In the majority of Hellenistic astrological texts, however, the hosts of deities are displaced by the attribution of planets to each of the decans. The gods and spirits that haunt these phases of time are not altogether absent in Hellenistic texts, but they lurk in the background.

In the majority of texts, the planets are attributed to the decans in a scheme that begins with Mars and then continuing in descending Ptolemaic order. Ptolemaic order, named for the author of the famed *Tetrabiblos* rather than the Greek dynasty in Egypt, is an ordering of the seven classical planets according to their relative speeds. In descending Ptolemaic order, the planets are listed from slowest to fastest. The order is Saturn, who completes his orbit in 29.5 years, Jupiter, whose revolution takes 12, then Mars, the Sun, the measure of a single year himself, Venus, Mercury and finally; the Moon, who takes less than a month to round the heavens. Though utilized to order the planet's influence over various decans, this sequence is not unique to the decans. It is, in fact, this order that determines the order of planetary hours, which themselves determine the sequence of planetary days. The same ordering of spheres makes up the order of planetary heavens in Dante's *Paradiso*, and also the pattern by which the planets are hung upon the Kabbalist's Tree of Life.

One eccentricity of the planet's allocation to the decans by means of descending Ptolemaic order is that while there are 7 classical planets, there are 36 decans. For those not mathematically inclined, 36 is not divisible by 7.  $7 \times 5$



is 35, which leaves a remainder of 1. Thus each planet has 5 decans that are its own, except for Mars, who owns a 6<sup>th</sup>. Furthermore, the decans both begin and end with Mars, who rules the last of Pisces and the first of Aries.

Although the allocation of the planets to the decans in descending order would come to dominate their use in the later Arabic, Medieval and Renaissance periods, at least one Hellenistic astrologer, Marcus Manilius, proposed an alternate system. Manilius, in his *Astronomica*, gives the signs themselves rulership over the decans. The first decan of Aries was given to Aries, the second to Taurus, the third to Gemini, and then the first decan of Taurus was given Cancer, the second decan Leo and so on in zodiacal order. Though this method is eccentric within the context of Hellenistic astrology, it later becomes a functional part of Vedic astrology.

The function that the decans came to play in the complex system of Hellenistic astrology is the same place they would occupy in the mainstream of "Western" astrology until its resurrection in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Each of the decans represented a place of dignity or power for a planet to reside within. The decans were one of several layers of dignity that an astrologer considers before making a delineation.

The concept of dignity in astrology is a fundamental one. Though the powers of the planets are constant, their ability to bring those significations to bear on human life is considered to be dependent on their position. When a planet is in a place where it is dignified, it is considered capable of bringing about exactly what it pleases. Dignity activates a planet, ripening its significations. For those performing a type of planetary magic, dignity determined, and still determines, the proper time to approach the body in question. Indeed, it is likely that this question—when to approach the gods connected to the planets, contributed significantly to the development of the concept of dignity in astrology.

In Hellenistic, and later forms of traditional astrology, there are several layers of dignity. Dignity was primarily conferred by means of Rulership and Exaltation. The concept of Rulership is still widely used, and offers the most commonly understood correspondence between the Planets and the Signs. Rulership, as the name implies, represents the relationship between a lord (or lady) and the territory which they are sovereign over. Since a given sign belongs to a planet, when the planet is in that place it is considered to have the power that a monarch has when in their own kingdom. This concept is integral to astrology, to the degree that in many ancient astrological texts,

signs are referred to as “dwelling places,” the dwellers being the planets themselves.

The second form of dignity is through Exaltation. The exaltations are another set of relationships between the planets and signs, thought by many researchers to be inherited from Babylonian traditions, though there is some argument that they may in fact be of Egyptian origin. In traditional astrology, a planet in its exaltation is likened to an honored visitor, to whom all courtesies are extended, yet free from the responsibility which the house’s master is burdened with. The correspondences provided by exaltation are still commonly in use by the majority of modern astrologers.

The third form of dignity is through trigonal rulership, called triplicity rulership in Medieval astrology. Trigon rulership has fallen out of use since the 17<sup>th</sup> century and sees little use amongst modern astrologers. Trigon rulership is not based on a relationship between planets and individual signs. It is instead a matter of the relationship between planets and elements. A trinity of planets is associated with each element. The Sun, Jupiter and Saturn have trigonal dignity in Fire signs. Mercury, Jupiter and Saturn have trigonal dignity in Air signs. Finally, the Moon, Venus and Mars are considered to have trigonal dignity in both Water and Earth signs. Dignity by Trigon or Triplicity rulership is likened in many traditional astrological texts to the rights and privileges that a person enjoys as a citizen of a given country.

The fourth form of dignity is called the “bounds” or “terms.” The bounds are unequal divisions of each sign into 5 segments. Each of these five segments of each sign is attributed to either Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter or Saturn. Unlike the other forms of dignity, there is no known rationale for the eccentric pattern of the bounds. They are likely a relic from an earlier system of astral lore which the earliest Hellenistic astrologers absorbed into their system, but which later expositors of the system were unable to explain. Nonetheless, the bounds are an important part of the system of traditional astrology, and presented as such in texts as late as the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The bounds are considered to confer upon the planet placed upon them the same level of support that one would have when amongst their family or clan.

The fifth form of dignity in traditional astrology is that which the decans confer. As detailed above, each decan was associated with one of the seven traditional planets. When a planet is placed in a decan which is associated with it, it is considered to gain strength. Dignity by decan was likened by Guido Bonatti, a 13<sup>th</sup> century Italian astrologer, with the dignity of one who

is in a foreign land, with no family of their own, yet who through their own skill and virtue makes a name for themselves.

This metaphor for decanic dignity is categorically different than the other forms. All other forms of dignity rely on belonging to a group or being granted rights by others. Decanic dignity, on the other hand, proceeds directly from the individual, representing the dignity which comes from a person's power to elevate themselves.

While the decans function as one of the many gears in the antikethyra mechanism of Hellenistic astrology, the astrologers of this period were also not blind to the strange spirits which haunt them.

Firmicus Maternus, a 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman astrologer, reports in his *Mathesis* that the decans each house a powerful spirit, referred to as one of the “*litirogoi*,” ancient Greek for “minister.” He goes on to explain that each of these “ministers” has a number of “soldiers” who work under him, and that these soldiers each own one third of the decan, or 3°20' of the zodiac. This further subdivision of the decans into 3 sections is an eccentric footnote in the Western system of traditional astrology, but later plays a more important role in Hindu, or Vedic astrology. Firmicus goes on to state that these spirits have power over the body—they can inflict or remove all manner of diseases on a person. This section ends abruptly, with Firmicus stating that it is not the proper place to extol the full mysteries of the decans.

The belief that a host of strange and powerful spirits lived within the decans is by no means unique to Firmicus. A number of astrological, Hermetic, Gnostic and proto-Kabbalistic writings during this period attest to the conviction that the decans are indeed haunted.

One of the most interesting decanic lists from this period comes from a text known as *Liber Hermetis*—the “Book of Hermes”. Although the only surviving copies were published in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, the text is quite clearly a Latin translation of an older work written in Greek. Experts date it from as late as the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE to as early as the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and many believe that even the Greek text is patched together from still older material. Although the bulk of the text is typical of Hellenistic astrology texts, the section on the decans is most intriguing. While the bulk of Hellenistic astrological texts simply list the planets associated with the decans, *Liber Hermetis* adds to this technical diagram an exotic image and name for each decan. The images are almost uniformly fantastic, containing wild amalgams of human and animal pieces. What is more, the descriptions of several of the decans explicitly reference

Egyptian gods, or make use of Egyptian animal symbolism. For example, *Liber Hermetis* gives the following for the second decan of Aries:

*"It has a two headed face and a lotus of the kings open on its head. In the compass of the lotus there are stars the splendor of gold. He has also in his right hand a water jug that is called life, in his left a scepter the extremity of which is bifurcated. This decan is clothed in linen and he treads under both his feet a tortoise entirely covered with a net."*

The images given in *Liber Hermetis* are an important intermediary between the Egyptian representations of the decans as gods and the decans' later anthropomorphic depictions in magical and astrological texts.

*Liber Hermetis* is also rare in that it lists a name for the spirit which rules over each decan. These names are a mish-mash of different god names. Egyptian and Greek names are, unsurprisingly, present, but in at least one case, that of the second decan of Aries, a well known Hebrew divine name is present—*Tzabaoth*—"Lord of Hosts."

The names and images given to the decans have no obvious or stated astrological purpose. This section of *Liber Hermetis* is less astrological text and more grimoire. It is clear that the unknown author is offering the images and names by which one might call the mighty spirits which haunt the decans. The answer to what one might call them for is suggested by the text, as well. Like Firmicus Maternus, *Liber Hermetis* associates the decans with diseases of the body. *Liber Hermetis*, however, goes further than Firmicus, and attributes to each decan a specific disease, or set of maladies. With power over a part of a body and its health or disease, the suggestion is that the status of these body parts and their relative health could be determined by the presence of planets in a given decan. Furthermore, the name and image of the spirit associated with the decan promises power over the body part. Between these sources, there is a strong case for magico-medical use of the decans during the earlier Egyptian period.

## HERMETICA

THE Hellenistic period saw not only the birth of astrology, but a widespread ferment of exotic spiritual traditions. Among them was Hermeticism, which

concerned itself very much with the magic and astrology of the decans. The collection of Hermetic writings from this period is called the *Corpus Hermeticum*, and the decans are not only discussed there, but accorded a singularly lofty position.

In Stobaeus fragment No. 7 of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, the decans were located beyond the zodiac itself, encompassed by nothing but the ultimate boundary of the universe. Furthermore, the decans were “free from the necessities laid on the other Stars.” In regard to other bodies, they are “above them all, as though they were inerrant Guards and Overseers of the whole, they night and day surround the universe.”

This Hermetic fragment reveals to us the place that the Egyptian conception of the Decans found in relationship to the heavenly spheres. This meaning of the decan's place above even the other fixed stars is truly meaningful only in the context of the Neoplatonic model of the universe, which was adopted both by Hermeticists and some Gnostic sects. For those unfamiliar with the Neoplatonic model of the universe, some explanation may be in order.

The cosmos was conceived of as series of spheres nested within each other, the Earth being the very center. The next sphere out, which enclosed the Earth's sphere, was that of the Moon—Luna. Luna's sphere was enclosed by Mercury, Mercury's by Venus, Venus' by the Sun, the Sun by Mars, Mars by Jupiter and then Jupiter by Saturn's revolution. The next sphere which encased those preceding it was that of the zodiac itself. Enclosing the zodiac was the sphere of fixed stars, which was the ultimate, final sphere, beyond which lay the absolute itself, the un-named one.

This model of the universe was a keystone to many concepts and practices in Neoplatonism, Gnosticism and Hermeticism. It's use and acceptance were not limited to esoteric groups, though. It was the accepted model among scholars and astronomers from antiquity until it was displaced in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by Nicholas Copernicus' heliocentric, or Sun-centered system.

This Neoplatonic or Ptolemaic model is still in use by a variety of esoteric groups. This endurance is in no small part due to its incorporation into many version of the Kabalalistic Tree of Life, and the Tree of Life's widespread adoption and adaptation by Western occultists over the last half a millennia. The most common arrangement is for each of the ten spheres to be allocated to each of the ten sephiroth. Although the Neoplatonic model may, with its earth centered universe, appear quaint to a modern viewer, it is in fact a quite

accurate model of the universe from the human point of view, for in our experience, we do not circle the Sun—it circles throughout sky. Furthermore, astronomers were able to predict planetary motion using it.

The more jarring features of the Neoplatonic model are those further flung layers, particularly the concept of the Sphere of Fixed Stars and the presence of the Absolute that hovered beyond. Given the knowledge which more advanced telescopes have made possible, we can be reasonably certain that the Almighty himself is not perched just beyond the reach our solar system, and can discard this particular feature of this as a literal model.

The Sphere of Fixed Stars, on the other hand, has a surprising correlation with the known physical structure of our solar system. Our nuclear dynamo, the Sun, outputs a tremendous amount and variety of energy, light being only the most obvious. This energy flows constantly outward, a phenomenon generally referred to as the solar wind, which gives comets their tails and distorts the electromagnetic fields of the planets. Yet there is a distinct point where the solar wind is no longer able to ward off the emanations of a billion other stars. This boundary is called the heliopause, and if modeled, it would look like a giant bubble enclosing the entire solar system. Energetically, it is the collision point between the power of the Sun and the light and energy from distant stars which manages to press into Sol's small system. The Sphere of the Fixed Stars indeed.

The primary error in thinking in the Neoplatonic model is not its structure, but the conceit that it models the entire cosmos, rather than merely our world. Conversely, the decentered, floating, galactic model of contemporary science often obscures the conditions in which all life, as we know it, takes place.

Located high above the other spheres of creation, the decans are granted great power in the Stobaeus fragment. To them is given the "downfalls of kingdoms, states' rebellions, plagues [and] famines, tidal waves [and] quakings of the earth; no one of these, O son, takes place without their action. Nay, further still, bear this in mind. If they rule over them, and we are in our turn beneath the Seven, dost thou not think that some of their activity extends to us as well,—[who are] assuredly their sons, or [come into existence] by their means?"

Being above all of known creation, the decans are accorded a tremendous amount of power—more so than any other astrological phenomenon known at the time. The decans are here even set above of the power of the Great



Bear—the constellation which revolves around the pole star and given supreme importance in many systems.

When asked what manner of body the decans have, the teacher in the Stobaeus fragment answers: “The many call them daimones; but they are not some special class of daimones, for they have not some other kind of bodies made of some special kind of matter, nor are they moved by means of soul, as we [are moved], but they are [simple] operations 3 of these Six-and-thirty Gods.”

These “six and thirty gods” are not alone—Her tells Tat here that they have “underworkers, ministers and soldiers.” This view point, that the great decanic spirits are served by a hierarchy of other daimons, echoes the Mathe-sis of Firmicus Maternus, who mentions that the “some who wish to elaborate this in more detail add three divinities each to every decan, which they call munifices, that is, liturgi.” *Munifices* and *Liturgi* are the Latin and Greek words for ministers, just as noted in the Stobaeus fragment. Firmicus goes on to note that the degrees are further divided into a great number of divine powers, which supports the further divisions “soldiers and underworkers” mentioned in the Stobaeus fragment.

It should also be noted that among the powers given to the decans in the Stobaeus fragment, “plagues” are among them, a point agreed upon by Firmicus’ mention that “By these they say are decreed sudden accidents, pains, sicknesses, chills, fevers and everything which happens unexpectedly,” and the menagerie of illnesses listed in *Liber Hermetis*.

More than an obscure subdivision of the zodiac which are especially resonant with the planets attributed to them, the *Corpus Hermeticum* sees them housing mighty spirits, gods served by legions of lesser spirits. The Hermeticists were not alone in this conceit, for other Hellenistic texts associate the decans with a curious mixture of Greek gods, spirits and heroes.

One such text is another fragment, titled “*The 36 Airts of the zodiac attributed to the Zoroastrians*.” This document is a list of Greek and Egyptian gods and daimones attributed to each decan. This list, and others like it, attest to the great curiosity and reverence which the people of the Hellenistic world had for the then-ancient calendar of Egyptians.

Not all such lists were framed in terms of pagan gods and spirits. *The Testament of Solomon*, dated somewhere between the first and fifth centuries CE, makes specific mention of the 36 decanic spirits. The decans are not syncretized with great gods nor accorded lofty places within the celestial sphere.

They are instead named as demons having power over diseases.

The Testament of Solomon describes how Solomon, the great Old Testament king, built his temple with the assistance of demons which commanded to do his bidding. The text is not merely a historical curiosity, but the cornerstone of a magical tradition which would endure to the present day. The association between decans and demons would also endure and become a cornerstone of the Golden Dawn's syncretization of decanic material with the Lesser Key of Solomon nearly two millennia later.

The ferment of spiritual activity which characterized the Hellenistic era came to an end with the conversion of Rome to Christianity and the waves of invasion which diminished its borders. The purges of pagan scholars and repeated barbarian sackings uprooted the vast magical and astrological material from the fertile soil of the Eastern Mediterranean. Like 36 seeds caught in the wind, the decans blew far away.



## Chapter 3: India

### THE SCIENCE OF LIGHT

WHILE the Roman Empire was in the midst of its fall, first to Christianity, then to the barbarians, the decans journeyed east. Over mountains they went, into the subcontinent of India. The 36 seeds fell on fertile ground, and when the fruit emerged, nourished by the Ganges, it tasted of the Indus Valley.

The decans, along with the bulk of other Hellenistic astrological concepts, first show up in India in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, in a text called the *Yavanajataka*. The name of this text contains a variety of Hellenistic astrological material, some of which would come to play a fundamental role in the Vedic astrological tradition.

The decans in the *Yavanajataka* present a fascinating array of images. They are not merely descriptions of Hellenistic images, but are instead re-interpretations using a variety of distinctly Hindu symbols and conventions. The decans would go on to be part of the fundamental structure of Vedic astrology, where they came to be known as the “*drekkanas*,” a Sanskritified version of the Greek “*dekanoi*.” Though the name was adapted, significant differences in the understanding and use of the decans are present in the Vedic system.

The *Brihat Jataka* of Vaharamihira, a 6<sup>th</sup> century CE astrological text, also includes a number of images for the decans, some of which are similar to those found in the *Yavanajataka*, while others are quite different. The set of images in the *Brihat Jataka* are in some cases almost identical to later Arabic pictures of the decans, such as those in the *Picatrix* and the ones recorded by Ibn Ezra in his *Beginning of Wisdom*.

Though not present in the *Yavanajataka*, the *drekkanas* would later, in the *Brihat Jataka* of Vaharmahira, come to be categorized by the presence of

certain symbols in their images. There were *sarpa*, *ayudha*, *chatuspad* and *kagha* drekkanas, respectively serpent, armed, animal and bird drekkanas.

In Vedic astrology, the thirds of the decans mentioned in passing in Firmicus' Mathesis also become an essential part of prognostication. Three to each decan, these 108 divisions of 3'20" each hold a specific meaning. Their use in Vedic astrology is informed by the importance of the number 108 in Hinduism, wherein many deities have 108 names, and strings of prayer beads have a like number of beads.

### A TALE OF TWO ZODIACS

IN Vedic astrology, the fundamental structure of the decans remains unchanged from the Hellenistic arrangement—they are 36 sections of the zodiac, with each sign containing exactly 3 decans. The decans also continued to be interpreted according to the planet which was thought to rule them. What did change, though, was the zodiac itself, as well as the system by which the planetary rulers were determined.

Vedic astrology uses the sidereal zodiac, which means that the signs are not mathematical subdivisions of the Sun-Earth cycle, but the literal sections of sky in which the constellations on the ecliptic are placed. It is, in other words, a stellar zodiac, although the sections of the sky where the constellations occur are somewhat artificially divided into geometrically perfect 30 degree twelfths of a circle. Nature is not so precise.

This allocation of the decans to a sidereal zodiac represents the beginning of a rift with the astrology of Arabia and later Western Europe. Although the difference was less than a handful of degrees in the 4<sup>th</sup> CE century, by the 21st century, it would become nearly 27 degrees, an unbridgeable abyss of meaning.

### PLANETARY RULERSHIP

IN addition to circling upon a different wheel, the drekkanas also partook of a different system of planetary rulership. While the Hellenistic astrologers had primarily used descending Ptolemaic order to determine which planets were to rule each of the signs, the Vedic astrologers used a different method-

ology entirely, known as Parāśara Dreskana. This system of decanic planetary rulership followed the logic of the signs and the elements. The first decan of a sign was given the ruler of the sign itself, the second decan was given the ruler of the next sign, in zodiacal order, of the same element. The third decan was given the planetary ruler of the last sign of the same element.

Let us take, for example, Aries. The ruler of Aries is Mars, and so the first decan of Aries in the Vedic system is ruled by Mars. The second decan is ruled by the next fire sign, which is Leo. The ruler of Leo is the Sun, and thus the ruler of the second decan of Aries is ruled by the Sun, the ruler of Leo. The third decan of Aries is ruled by the next fire sign, which is Sagittarius. Sagittarius's ruler is Jupiter, and thus the third decan of Aries is ruled by Jupiter.

This scheme offers a very different set of planetary rulers than the one that descending Ptolemaic order gives us. There are a few overlaps, but these are incidental—the scheme as a whole yields a very different set of meanings.

The later images of the decans in the Vedic tradition began a trend that we will see exemplified in both Arabia as well as Western Europe. The images and meanings of the decans drift further and further from their Egyptian moorings in godforms, and come to represent more and more exactly the power of the planets in signs.

## DIVISIONAL CHARTS

ALTHOUGH the usage of decans drifted away from imagery, Vedic astrology made and still makes great use of the drekkanas by means of divisional charts.

Divisional charts are an essential component of Vedic astrology. They entail the division of the zodiac by different numbers in order to focus on a particular area of a person's life. Several divisional charts are used, but it is the division by three, the drekkana chart, that is relevant here. When the territory of the 12 signs is further divided by the three, the 36 decanic territories are the result. The division by three is thought to provide a focus on the various significations related to the 3<sup>rd</sup> house, which in Vedic astrology shows siblings, skills, drive and sexual vitality.

Although some Vedic astrologers may take into consideration the images of the faces, the majority of the interpretation is based on the planetary ruler

of that drekkana. Unlike other systems, different systems of planetary rulers are utilized in order to evaluate specific areas of the life.

The most common, the Parāśara Drekkana, utilizes the system outlined above, and is used to investigate the role of siblings in the native's life.

The Jagannāth Drekkana uses a similar system of planetary rulership as the Parāśara. In the Jagannāth, though, all of the signs of the same element have their rulers ordered in the same manner. For example first decan of Leo corresponds to Aries, the second to Leo and the third to Sagittarius. The same sequence of Aries, Leo, Sagittarius is used for all fire signs. The same pattern, which is summarized on the appended table, is applied to the signs of all four elements. The Jagannāth Drekkana is used to focus on what a person applies their passion to, and the results of their actions.

The Paravritti-traya uses the same allocation of the signs to the decans as Manilius did in his *Astronomica*, allotting the signs, in zodiacal order, to the decans. It is used primarily for investigating talents and skills the native might possess, as well as possible blockages to their manifestation.

Finally, the Somnath-Drekkana allocates the signs to the decans of the Fire and Air signs in the same manner as Manilius, but for the Water and Earth signs begins with Pisces and moves in contra-zodiacal order. This particular subsystem is said to show the native's core vitality and its manifestations in sexuality, health, and energy levels.

Unlike the other chapters of the decan's story, the Indian section cannot be said to truly end, for the drekkanas are used to this day. But West of the Indus Valley, regional turbulence swept the decans into yet another incarnation.





## Chapter 4: The Arabian Empire

### *WITHIN THE TEMPLE OF THE MOON*

IN the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, culture on the Arabian peninsula underwent a series of dramatic shifts. During this time prophet Muhammad united the scattered people of the Middle East under the single banner of Islam. Over the ensuing centuries, the Islamic empire would come to occupy more territory than the Roman empire.

One consequence of such far reaching expansion was the absorption of the legacy of classical antiquity. The mathematics, philosophy, and astrology of the Hellenistic period came to dwell within the Arabian empire, where it was translated, practiced and developed over several hundred years. Numerous sources also offer evidence of discourse with Indian astrologers, and the serious consideration of their ideas by Islamic astrologers and magicians. Decanic material is present in many of the magical and astrological works which remain from this period.

### THE GODLESS IMAGE

DURING the Arabic period, the images of the decans undergo several enduring shifts. They cease to be depicted as mighty gods or spirits. Gone are the list of deities and daimones. They are replaced by symbolically loaded images of men and women in different life situations. This is a fundamental shift in the manner in which the decans were pictured. While the earlier images attempted to represent the spirit or power that brought about a cluster of life circumstances, the images from the Arabic period primarily picture the circumstances themselves. It is not the causative diety or daimon, but the result

in human life that is pictured. Instead of the source of the rays, we see instead their effect. These are both parts of the continuum of source and action, and when regarded in such a manner can be most instructive.

The fundamentally human images that permeate the Arab period are likely the result of the decans moving, for the first time, into a strictly monotheistic culture. Although the study of astrology was largely tolerated, and sometimes encouraged, during most of this period of Islamic cultural dominance, petitioning strange spirits was not. There can be little doubt that the decanic images produced during this period were shaped by this cultural pressure.

The Harranian Sabians, the self-professed followers of Hermes, are largely to thank for preserving a wide variety of Hermetic material, and formatting the bulk of what came to define planetary magic for Medieval and Renaissance Europe. Yet the Sabians were subjected to a number of religious purges, and their presentation of material may have changed over time to fit the demands of political survival.

#### PLANETARY IMAGES

ANOTHER important feature of the faces in the Arabic period is an increasing reliance on the theorized planetary rulers to determine the content of the images. While in the Egyptian and Hellenistic phases, planetary assignments were incidental to the images and meanings of the decans, in the Arabic phase the planetary rulership schemes, especially the one based on descending Ptolemaic order, come to dominate the depiction schemes. This trend, like several of the others initiated during the Arabic period, set precedents that endure in Europe for the next millennia.

The role of the decans in the astrology of the Arabic period is virtually identical to that which they played in the Hellenistic and Roman eras. The decans were used as a minor form of dignity, granting planets power when they passed through the decans they were considered to rule. To judge from the texts, it seems that the primary difference between the decans' treatment in the Arabic period is that they did not illicit the same sense of awe or mystery that they did for the Greek and Roman astrologers. The Greeks understood the great antiquity of the Egyptians, and showed deference to their understanding of many mysteries. Meanwhile, the Arabic astrologers

came more than a thousand years after the fall of ancient Egypt, and had no reason to treat the decanic material with the confused reverence seen in the Greek and Roman periods.

## THE HARRANIANS

ALTHOUGH no great innovations occurred in regard to the astrological use of the decans, their magical use is powerfully attested to. Part of long ago Babylon, Harran was the site of the sacred Temple of the Moon, one of seven temples dedicated to the seven wanderers. Unlike the other great temples to the planets, the Temple of the Moon in Harran continued to host astral rites long after the coming of Muhammed. While the empire that enclosed it fought to expand the reach of Islam all over the Mediterranean and Middle-Eastern worlds, in Harran the practice of even-then ancient Babylonian astral rites was fused with the mighty pagan inheritance of the Hellenistic world. For nearly 500 years, this single settlement developed and maintained a unique synthesis of Neo-platonism, Hermeticism, Astrology and Babylonian astral magic.

The Sabians of Harran played a crucial but often neglected role in the maintenance and development of astrological, alchemical and magical traditions. The Sabians formed a crucial bridge for the Hermetic arts and sciences, ferrying them from the decay of Byzantine Rome all the way to the shores of Medieval Europe years later. Nearly all of the greatest Arabic astrologers, alchemists and magicians studied in Harran. Without them, astrology would not have survived the West's dark ages, nor would the complexities or alchemy or the high cunning of astral sorceries survived, much less thrived. The *Gayat Al Hakim*, also called the *Picatrix*, an astral grimoire of legendary power, would also not have come into existence without the people who kept the Temple of the Moon.

Harran was, perhaps, the sole inheritor and practitioner of Babylonian astral magic traditions from 600-1000 AD. Contemporary astrology can trace a significant portion of its DNA back to the Babylonians, for it was their detailed planetary and stellar mythology, coupled with their careful notation of the planet's movements that made natal, or horoscopic, astrology possible in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.

Harran thus preserved unique and ancient pagan practices at a time when

both the Christian and Islamic worlds were being steadily purged of them. Yet the Sabians were not pagan fundamentalists. Hellenistic influences abound in what record we have of the Sabians' practice. They embraced the metaphysics of Neoplatonism, the experimental philosophy of Hermeticism and the science of Hellenistic astrology, forging a sophisticated framework for the Babylonian astral magick they inherited.

Though Harran developed this synthesis for over 600 years, researchers have been slow to uncover it. Existing, as it did, in the midst of a period of unprecedented Islamic dominance over the Mediterranean and Middle-Eastern worlds, the Harranians' apostasy was constantly in danger of being revealed. The Temple of the Moon faced persecution many times, suffering purges from the Byzantines in the West and the Caliphate in the East. Once established as part of the Abbasid Caliphate, the Harranians were forced to find a place in an Islamic world. At that time it was permissible to not be Muslim—a people living within the boundary of the Caliphate had merely to declare their faith and pay a tax. Yet one had to declare allegiance to one of the faiths listed in the Qu'ran.

The Harranians identified Idris as their prophet. Idris, a prophet of the Qu'ran, was said to have ascended to heaven without dying, like the Biblical Enoch with whom he was identified. At the time, Idris was also syncretized with the legendary Hermes, and it was Hermes the Harranians declared to be their prophet. Harran was thus an entire city dedicated to Hermeticism, perhaps the only one in the world's history.

#### THE GOAL OF THE WISE

THE greatest record of the astrological magic of the Arabic period comes to us through the *Ghayat Al Hakim*, also known as the *Picatrix*. The *Picatrix* is an 11<sup>th</sup> century text, one of few which details the magical theory of the Sabians of Harran. It contains an extensive section on the decans and the magical images associated with them. Intriguingly, the decanic section includes not only the lists seen in other contemporary Arabic texts, but also includes a section about Indian opinions on the faces and the various powers attributed to them.

In previous periods the decans were given the names of gods and spirits and likely used to schedule prayers and petitions to those entities. The Pi-

catrrix, however, attributes no spirits to the decans, nor does it include the names of any gods. The power instead resides in the images themselves, and their correspondence to the sky above.

The theory by which the power of the decanic images could be impressed upon reality is the same by which the majority of the planetary magic in the *Picatrix* operates. The image was impressed upon a proper material at a fitting time. They could be cut into gemstones, etched into metal, or perhaps even drawn with an appropriate ink. Though the theory and practice are far more complex than this, the essence of the formulae is the same for a great many operations—an appropriate image impressed upon a corresponding material at exactly the right time. From this trinity of factors great power was considered to arise.

The magical theory and the many experiments contained within the *Picatrix* proved to have a tremendous impact on the astrological magic of Medieval and Renaissance Europe, carrying the strange legacy of the Sabians secretly through later centuries. The images of the decans contained within the *Picatrix* would show up, sometimes with very little alteration, in texts more than half a millennia later.

The Arabian Caliphates were slowly eroded by internal divisions, the rise of a militant Catholicism in the West and invaders from the East, most significantly the magnificent horde of Mongols. With these political shifts, our story goes West, where it continues amid the cold stone of Medieval castles and cathedrals.



## Chapter 5: Medieval and Renaissance Europe

### A FLUORESCENCE OF IMAGES

As Islamic dominance waned over the first few centuries of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium CE, the fortunes of Western Europe waxed. The crusades came, and came again and again. One result of these disastrous religious conflicts was the migration of astrological lore from the Middle East to Western Europe.

The decans rode this unsteady historical tide, and by the 13<sup>th</sup> century, they begin appear once again, though this time described in Medieval Latin. The role of the decans in Medieval astrology is essentially unchanged from its role in the earlier Arabic period. They are utilized as a form of dignity for planets, but offer little descriptive power.

The decans were not the only material transmitted by Greek and Arabic texts. Indeed, the entirety of the classical tradition crept into the barbarous West. Through massive translation projects, the lost philosophy, art and science of the Greco-Roman world re-entered the European continent—the accidental spoils of war.

As this inheritance was slowly decoded and assimilated, Western Europe changed. While the decans in the Medieval period play the same small, supporting role that they played in the works of Arabic astrologers, the Renaissance saw the decanic images once again fluoresce. The Renaissance contained within it a series of philosophical, aesthetic and technological innovations, either drawn from or inspired by their absorption of Greco-Hellenistic texts. The aesthetics of this time are strongly informed by Greco-Hellenistic pagan themes and it is here we find the most public instances of decanic images.

Perhaps the greatest surviving images of the decans line the walls of the *Palazzo Schifanoia*, in Ferrara, Emilia-Romagna Italy. Its name designates



itself as an “escape from boredom” and it was constructed as a place of recreation. Its walls are host to massive images of the thirty six decans, each rendered in full color. Though many of them are close approximations of the images described in the *Picatrix*, some innovation on the part of the artist, Cosimo Tura, is clear.

There is also a strong case that the decans made their way inside the walls of the Vatican itself. Beneath the 7 prophets and 5 Sybilline oracles, representing the 12 zodiac signs, there are pictured the 33 ancestors of Christ plus 3 additional symbols, denoting 36 decans of the Zodiac. Although far astray from the traditional decanic images, the Sistine Chapel offers an interesting instance of the syncretization of decanic material with the imagery of the dominant faith.

The decanic images also feature in Giordano Bruno's system of memory. *De Idearum Umbris* contains descriptions of decanic images which are largely identical with those found in other contemporary texts.

One of those texts is Johannes Engel's *Astrolabium Planum*. Published in 1488, the *Planum* features line drawings of each of the 36 faces. These images offer little aesthetic flourish, and are in many cases identical to those found in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* by Henry Cornelius Agrippa.

Originally published in 1525, the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* have been republished continuously over the last half millennium. Agrippa's work can be rightly said to have influenced nearly every major work of European occultism since.

The *Three Books* are a compendious work, and include a great deal of astrological material, including the decans. The perspective on the decanic, and other astrological material, is interesting, and follows in the footsteps of the *Picatrix*. Magic and astrology are both presented as matters of natural philosophy. They represent the obscure mechanics by which the created world functions. They are not super-natural any more than the invisibility of atoms to the naked eye is a supernatural. This attitude toward occult knowledge is typical of the Renaissance period from which it hails, for the currently strict difference between the material and subtle mechanics of the world did not yet exist. Astrology and magic are as much a part of the Greco-Roman inheritance as were Aristotle's physics.

Positioning works of magic and divination as a matter of “natural philosophy,” also provided practitioners with a certain level of immunity to accusations of heresy, as these purported merely to describe God's creation, but not

displace it. Though this may have been shield enough for flimsy assaults, it was not sufficient to rebuff the waves of inquisition which swept the West before Agrippa's time and afterward.

The decanic images presented in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* are of the same style which emerged in the Arabic period. They are composed of scenes of men, women, animals and implements. There are no spirit or god names attached to them. Furthermore, they are for the most part rather literal. The surreal and grotesque touches which characterize the Hellenistic, Indian and early Arabic images are absent. The process by which the decanic images are utilized magically is, however, essentially the same as the one developed by the Arabic magicians and astrologers many years earlier.

Though the decanic images bloomed again during Europe's Renaissance, there was little innovation or alteration to their role in the practice of astrology or magic. The one exception to this may be the *Book of Raziel*, a fundamental Kabbalistic text which discusses a set of 36 angels. In that much other astrological lore is discussed, it is difficult to dismiss the grouping of angels into a tribe of 36 as accidentally analogous to the decans. This likely overlap between the decans and angelology is particularly interesting as a precedent for the 19<sup>th</sup> century syncretism between the decans and the 72 angels of the *Shem ha Mephoresh*.

Other than this fascinating exception, the decans' course through Medieval and Renaissance Europe is largely unchanged from that set by the Arabic astrologers and magicians centuries previous. The decans were transmitted and utilized astrologically to provide dignity to otherwise peregrine planets and magically as potent but godless images.



## Chapter 6: The Enlightenment

*REASON'S TORCH AND PITCHFORK*

MULTIPLE forces nearly scrubbed Hermetic lore from the face of Europe. The first was what is often spoken of as the Inquisition, though it is folly to refer to it in the singular. Over a period of several hundred years, not beginning but certainly intensifying in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Roman Catholic Church, in conjunction with a variety of regents, launched a series of inquisitions.

While pagan and Hermetic elements had crept into the practice and vocabulary of artists, intellectuals, kings and clergy during the Renaissance, the series of Inquisitions scoured many of these influences from the discourse.

While the Inquisitions were properly branches of the Catholic church, the witchhunts and witch craft acts occurred well outside the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church, such as within the walled isles of largely Protestant Tudor England.

Magical practices were strictly and explicitly forbidden by many of these acts and edicts. Astrology fared slightly better, for the astrology of this period was still wedded to the principles of Aristotelian science. The planets' meddling effulgences were not largely considered a matter heretical belief, but rather part of the grand mechanism of the created world. The practical application of this science was, however, another matter. Although astrology could be used to speculate about the weather, ascertain ideal times for sowing, or a variety of other mundane and electional uses, the art of natal astrology—the reading of fate, fortune and character—occupied a heretical space. Legally indistinguishable from other practices of divination, in this area there was little difference between the astrologer and the witch.

There were in England several prominent legal proceedings which make this point quite clearly. John Dee, court astrologer, tutor and perhaps the

most famous English magus was placed on trial in 1555 for the crime of calculating the birth charts of Elizabeth Tudor and her half-sister, Mary. This was the crime of “calculation,” looking into the prospects of an individual with astrology. It likely that this type of edict was unevenly enforced, for in Dee’s case it cannot be separated from the bloody intrigues of the Tudor succession crisis. Nonetheless, with laws such as the Witchcraft Acts enacted, the astrological practitioner, in addition to the witch and magician, practiced their art while a sword dangled overhead.

It is interesting to note that knowledge of the planets and their powers was not forbidden here—merely their impact on the nature of an individual’s life. It is difficult to imagine that this set of legalities did not play an important role in severing the once-joined arts of the magician, the alchemist and the astrologer. For one learned in astrology, what greater impediment could there be to extending his practice into the complementary arts of talismanry and ritual than torture, death and ruin? The decans, by now firmly housed in astrological and magical traditions, were forced, with their host arts, into further secrecy, neglect and decline.

#### THE ENLIGHTENMENT

WHILE authorities secular and spiritual warred against astrology and magic, another front opened—the ascendancy of what is often called modern science.

A series of breakthroughs regarding the mechanics of the physical world began to shake the continent in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Copernicus, Galileo, Newton and others established mathematical and experimental proofs for the workings of gross matter. This was a critical series of moments, for it was the first point that European science progressed beyond its classical inheritance. For the first time in over a millennia, truth did not hide in the past, but instead hovered somewhere in the future.

Of these breaks with the past, few had the impact that Copernicus’ heliocentric model of the universe did. While Newton’s physics cleared the way for advances in engineering and reverberated throughout philosophical circles, they did not challenge the predominant cosmology of the time. Although largely taken for granted by educated people today, the idea that the Earth orbited the Sun, rather than the contrary, was revolutionary in its implications.

The Hellenistic world, as well as that of the Romans, the Muslim one that followed and the Medieval and Renaissance eras before, had all housed their understandings inside a geocentric model of the universe. As discussed in Chapter 2, this Aristotlean arrangement of concentric spheres was the cosmology in which both practical inquiry and religious observance took place. Astronomers calculated planetary motion, as Ptolemy had, within the shells, and Dante climbed upward through them on his ascent to the Almighty himself.

The Ptolemaic universe enshrined the human at the heart of creation, as in the Bible, and had become a point of Church doctrine by the late Medieval period. It is therefore not shocking that the early proponents of this theory, such as Galileo, were persecuted as dangerous heretics. Yet it is puzzling that this new model was considered by some to invalidate the practice of astrology, for the power of planets and stars does not depend on a particular arrangement. In many ways, the introduction of the heliocentric model exposed the workings of a more, not less, orderly universe. Nor should fine equations for gravity disrupt a sorcerous praxis. The rise of the rational mind in the Enlightenment is given credit for cleansing Western Europe of such superstitions, yet none of these legitimate discoveries necessitated such purgations. This incongruity becomes all the more strange when we consider the personal interests of the founding fathers of science. Newton, Kepler, Brahe, and a slew of other notables were practitioners of the Hermetic trinity of arts.

#### THE MACHINE UNIVERSE

THERE were indeed other factors afoot, not the least of which were the series of Inquisitions and the enactment of Witchcraft acts which largely preceded the Enlightenment. The other critical factor was the slow rise of a reductive, mechanistic paradigm which the previously mentioned men laid the foundation for unwittingly. The blame for this iron cage might be well laid at the feet of one Renee Descartes, but the world in which a whole continent lives is the work of no one man.

Magic, in the vast majority of its forms, assumes a universe animated by spirit. Through petition of spirits great and small, changes might be wrought. A dead universe, composed only of ever smaller gears, offered no purchase for traditional forms of magic. A world without angels, demons, or gods was



deaf to all petitions. The powers of the planets, too, suffer in such a world. Though they might reflect light to us and in the Moon's case exert gravity, no subtle intelligence is seen to ride on these gross forces.

Menaced by Witchcraft acts which would not be repealed until the 20<sup>th</sup> century and trapped within a spiritless clockwork model of creation, the magical and astrological arts faded from sight. They slunk into the dustiest corners of libraries, the bowels of secret societies and the covert meetings of covens. The decans went with the artes to which they were joined, and nary would be seen of them until the latter half of the 19th century, at which point the industrial revolution had made the machine world a physical reality.

#### THE END OF AN ERA

ASTROLOGY'S traditional phase is generally considered to end with William Lilly, the most famous British astrologer of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. There is nothing remarkable about the decans in Lilly's work, though it bears examination due to its common use as the terminal point of traditional astrology. The decans are utilized as a minor form of dignity, much as they had for over a thousand years. No mention is made of the images or their various uses. Owing to the twin scourges of Enlightenment reason and the moral arms-race initiated by the Reformation, the astrological and magical traditions which hosted the decans retreated from view. No brushes paint their images and few texts speak of their qualities. In Europe, much of the astrological and magical material went underground, where they were tended, in secret, by generations of members of fraternal orders.

On the North American continent, the pressure of religious institutions and intellectual trends was not as great, and astrology enjoyed some popularity in the form of almanacs, such as Benjamin Franklin's best-selling, pseudonymous *Poor Richard's Almanack*. Although astrology enjoys some popular appeal during this period, there is little, if any, technical innovation. The decans are often neglected, and when they are not they are simply used as a minor form of dignity. Their relationship to image-magic is neglected, and while the gods and spirits said to dwell within them lie forgotten.



## Chapter 7: Modernity

### *SYNTHESIS AND NEGLECT*

AMIDST the clatter of great machines and the cruelties of colonialism, the wheel of faces once again rose to halo the mind-sky. By the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, something had stirred in the Western psyche, a rogue spiritual impulse unsatisfied by a mouldering Catholicism, the now oppressive Protestant faiths or the hollow consolations of scientific progress.

The corpse of these old forms grew ripe, and the seeds which fell upon it quickened vigorously. Pieces of Hindu doctrine were imported from colonized India, and the echoes from ancient Egyptian temples bounced through the hallways of the British library. Japan and China were pried open by Western powers, and Buddhism began to trickle into the Western mind. Growing America absorbed bits of its exterminated native people's lore, and spontaneous combustions of spirit sparked a host of idiosyncratic Christian practices in the New World.

New Christian cults grew out of this strange loam, as did the friendly necromancy of Spiritualists and the sprawling complexities of Theosophy. It is against this burgeoning occult backdrop that astrology and Hermeticism arise from their centuries-long sleep, resurrected in a syncretic Victorian body.

### **ASTROLOGY**

ASTROLOGY re-emerged in the American and Western European cultural spheres in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, born on the sturdy back of the burgeoning Theosophical movement and propagated by an increasing number of astrological almanacs and magazines.



The astrology which emerged during this period was not, however, the same astrology that had gone into hiding hundreds of years previous. Many of the more specialized tools which had been part of the astrological tradition for thousands of years were absent. The great bulk of prognostic tools which had been the backbone of predictive astrology for millennia lay in lost or unreadable books. The horary or judicial branch of astrology failed to regain its former vigor or prominence, as well. Furthermore, and perhaps most problematic for our story, many of the astrologers of this renaissance did not use the multiple layers of planetary dignity omnipresent in the tradition previous. It is in this layer that the decans have their most important function in astrology, and dislodged from this place they are of little value. Furthermore, when the decans are mentioned in passing during this period, no connection is made to the host of images which enriched their meaning beyond that of a simple "plus" to a planet which happened to reside in his proper face.

During the modern period the decans were reintroduced as subdivisions of each sign, but without the historical wealth of meanings or magical functions associated with them. Curiously, the system of planetary rulership which accompanied them was not the system practiced in the West for over 2000 years, but the triplicity system, known in Vedic astrology as the Parāśara Dreskaan, where the three divisions of each sign are associated with the three signs of the appropriate element.

The bulk of the meaning attributed to the decans is the product of this process. For example, the Aries decan of Sagittarius produces natives which are more combative and short tempered than the rest of their Sagittarius kin.

This method was popularized by Alan Leo, the famed publisher of astrological magazines, but soon became the dominant mode of determining rulers and delineating the decans. No longer capable of providing dignity for the planets placed within them and lacking the imagery to flesh out their meaning, the decans remained a curious sidenote in much of 20<sup>th</sup> century astrology in the West.

#### A LIGHT ON THE EASTERN HORIZON

MEANWHILE, in England, a very strange society was being organized. The Order of the Golden Dawn was founded in 1887 by William Robert Woodman, William Wynn Westcott, and Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers. The

Golden Dawn would come to count a number of notable persons as members, and become the single most important influence on occult studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

A history of the Golden Dawn, its members, and their dramatic interactions is well beyond the scope of this book, being the subject of several studies already. What is of interest is the use to which certain members of the Golden Dawn put the decans to. By the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, an elaborate syncretic system had grown up around the decans. This system linked the divinatory images of the Tarot, the 36 divisions of the Zodiac, the demons of the *Lemegeton* and the angels of the *Shem ha Mephoresh*.

Though at first a striking synthesis, this elaborate system drew on well established precedents. The *Testament of Solomon* attributed demonic spirits to the decans in the early centuries of the first millennia of the Common Era, and the *Book of Raziel* suggests that angelic spirits were similarly linked to the decans during the same time period. The contention that potent and dangerous spirits lived within the decans is present in a less bifurcated form all throughout the Hellenistic period and the Egyptian one before that.

The choirs of angels and legions of devils assigned to the decans in this system fit into the decans in a curiously simple matter, for the two lists of good and evil spirits each contain 72 names, making it simple to assign a pair to each decan.

The 72 angels are derived from the *Shem ha Mephoresh*, which means, in Hebrew, "the explicit name of God." Although it was earlier used to refer to the four-letter *Tetragrammaton* or a 42 letter name, in Jewish, Christian and Hermetic Kabbala, it refers to a string of 216 Hebrew letters derived from Exodus 14:19-21. These letters are then divided into three letter sections, which comprise the names of 72 angels or intelligences which labor upon creation. A pair of angels is then assigned to each of the 36 decans. It is interesting to note the relationship between 36 and 216. 36 is 6 to the 2<sup>nd</sup> power,  $6 \times 6$ , while 216 is 6 to the 3<sup>rd</sup> power,  $6 \times 6 \times 6$ .

Though legions of devils man the cells of various works of demonology, it is a very specific list that came to roost upon the decans. These demons come exclusively from *The Lesser Key of Solomon*, also known as the *Lemegeton*, an anonymous 17<sup>th</sup> century grimoire. Therein the appearances and powers of these devils are made known, as are the means to summon and direct them. The list is an odd one, containing a number of demonized gods and spirits from a host of other cultures. The demons are said to be those constrained by

Solomon to build his temple. Though the text only dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it is part of a much older tradition of Solomonic magic, which dates back to the late Hellenistic *Testament of Solomon*. Some authors have claimed that the Golden Dawn's association between the decans and the Solomonic demons is entirely arbitrary, but *Testament of Solomon* itself, at the very dawn of the tradition, makes mention of the demons which haunt the 36 decans. If the association between demons is arbitrary, it is certainly not new.

Though the association of angels and demons with the decans resumes an old theme, it is interesting that none of the Golden Dawn tradition assigns gods or goddesses to the decans. This is unusual, for work from this period overflows with tables of correspondence for various deities. In the Golden Dawn's system the powers attributed to the decans have come a long way from the seasonal deities and daimones once assigned to them. Here the decans float free, a mathematical abstraction, only tangentially chained by cyclical time.

This particular take on the decans is reinforced by the syncretization with the Tarot. Though the Tarot consists of 78 cards, there are numerous subdivisions. The first major division is between the Major Arcana and the Minor. The Major Arcana consists of the 22 cards which do not have suits. It is primarily their presence which differentiates a Tarot deck from that of a standard deck of playing cards. After having removed the 22 Major Arcana, 56 cards remain. Of these, 16 are the Court Cards, the Queens, Knights, Kings and Pages of the four suits. The remaining 40 have a structure identical to that of a pack of playing cards; there are four suits of 10 cards each. Subtract from these 40 cards the 4 aces and you are left with 36 cards, the 2-10s of each suit.

In the Tarot, each of the four suits is attributed to the four classical elements, just like the 12 zodiac signs, making the connections between the two relatively simple. The fire signs, Aries, Leo and Sagittarius are connected to the suit of Wands, the water signs Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces to Cups, the air signs Libra, Aquarius and Gemini to Swords and finally, the earth signs Capricorn, Taurus and Virgo to Pentacles. The signs are further divided by astrologers into Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable categories, corresponding with beginning, maintaining and finishing qualities, respectively. The nine cards of each suit are then divided by Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable, which each receive three cards. Thus the two, three and four of each suit are associated with the Cardinal sign of the appropriate element, the five, six and seven with

the Fixed Sign and the eight, nine and ten to the Mutable sign. With each Sign fixed firmly to a trio of cards, it is then a simple matter to allot one card to each of the faces. This elegant system preserves the logic inherent in the signs.

This syncretism between the decans and the cards strongly informs many of the images of the Rider Waite Tarot, the most influential Tarot deck in North America. The iconic Rider Waite deck was a collaboration between two Golden Dawn members—artist Pamela Coleman-Smith and mystic Arthur Edward Waite.

The influence of traditional decanic images on the cards of the minor arcana in the Rider Waite deck is undeniable when older decanic images and the corresponding cards are compared side by side, as several are nearly identical. The minor arcana are not, though, a rote repetition of previous decanic images, but should be seen as an inspired re-interpretation, for many of the cards are markedly different from the faces which they correspond to.

There is no evidence that the Tarot previous to the Rider Waite deck drew from decanic imagery, but it is quite clear that those since have either been directly informed by it, in the case of the Rider Waite and later Thoth decks, or indirectly, as both decks have inspired a host of derivative works.

The Golden Dawn synthesis of Tarot and decanic material also extended to the Kabbalah. The essential structure of the Kabbalah is the Tree of Life, which is itself composed of Sephira, or spheres of light. These ten spheres, arranged in a particular manner, are considered to be the root pattern for all of creation. The concept is not unlike a genetic code, repeated, carried and copied by every cell of reality.

In some schools of Kabbalah, this arrangement of ten spheres is considered to exist in four worlds—a quaternary division of reality itself. These four worlds have attributed to them the four classical elements—Earth, Air, Water and Fire. If each sphere of light or Sephirah is considered to exist in each of the four worlds we come to a total of 40 spheres, the same number we arrive at if we have four suits of 10 cards apiece, as in the Tarot. As with the Tarot, the first of each set of 10 is then removed, leaving four sets of nine, or thirty six, the number of decans. Thus is each decan associated with one of the Sephirah in one of the four worlds.

The sprawling synthesis engineered by the Golden Dawn and writ plain in *Book T* and later in *The Book of Thoth* dominated what 20<sup>th</sup> century discussion there was of decans. The late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have, however, seen a massive surge of interest in pre-modern texts, as well as research

and translation projects to make those texts available. A greater wealth of material is available now than at any point previous.

Thus the tale of the decans' movement through history has not come to an end, but merely to the present moment. The ultimate end of this odd calendar, with its four millennia long collection of symbols and spirits, has yet to be revealed.



## Part II:

# THE 36 FACES

THE delineations of the individual decans which follow are the distillation of a period of magical and astrological work by the author. Though the themes discovered often strongly coincide with those suggested by earlier images, the descriptions and explanations contained within the section are not limited to pre-existing historical content. It is not a work of strict reconstruction, but a work of the present deeply informed by past.

The patterns which dance amidst the decans are ever-changing. Every one contains a 36<sup>th</sup> of the intersection of spirit and matter. Though their essential formula may be apprehended, the number of situations which they might give rise to is limitless. To know the decans, one must merely stare into them long enough. Soon enough scenes of human life will appear, haunted by angels, demons, daimones and gods. Those images generated by the mind's communion with the 36 faces are the most potent in magic and the most true in divination.

The 36 sections which follow begin with an elucidation of the essential qualities of each decan, applicable to the magical artist and the astrologer alike. The light of each decan is then splintered through the prism of the classical planets, which both limit and activate the power of the faces. The qualities which each planet in a decan brings to a nativity are discussed. Furthermore, each delineation of natal power is followed by a discussion of the



magical potency the planet offers in that face. These descriptions of natal and magical power should by no means be considered final or absolute, for they exist primarily to help initiate the process of understanding, not complete it. They should be considered an addition to traditional sources, not a replacement for them.

This text is thus structured so as to have value both to the magician and the astrologer. Nonetheless, it is important for both populations to consider the faces from both angles, for the decans have always existed in both worlds.





## ARIES I: THE AXE

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WHEN the Arabic sages stared into the first decan of the zodiac and beckoned what was veiled to come forward, they saw a dark man with crimson eyes, his hands clutching a battle axe and his manner furious. This figure was said to grant victory in war—domination over one's enemies. A half-millennium before that, this decan was identified with the axe-wielding spirits Chontare and Aulathamas. 500 years later, in his *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, Agrippa describes the figure in nearly identical terms. A similarly vermillion figure stares out over a castle wall in the Two of Wands in the Rider Waite Tarot, its image informed by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century syncretization of the card with this decan.

The axe pictured in so many of the images is a weapon of obvious martial purpose, yet the axe's menace conceals its role as a symbol and magical tool. The gory martial history of the axe need not be explained, but its function may need to be understood with more subtlety. The axe is the primordial splitter, the first and still best tool for creating two out of one. Life, on all levels, requires this division for growth. The cell undergoes mitosis, splitting

itself. All cosmologies begin with the sundering of the One.

The splitting of the One is a severance from the symbolic mother—the womb from which all things emerge. In this decan, what is motherly and unifying constricts development rather than furthering it. The child is only truly born as a separate individual when the umbilical cord has been severed.

The axe is also a crucial tool in taming the environment. Trees become lumber beneath its blade. The dynamic but unsympathetic profusion of nature is brought under the pattern of individual will. A man makes a cabin for himself in the wilderness.

The axe is thus a tool of the first individual, bravely severing himself from the primordial mother and building a distinct and individual life. This assertion of selfhood is undiluted yang, and in principle phallic, no matter the gender of who embodies it. The phallus in play here is a symbol of potency, yet its reality involves tremendous vulnerability, the same vulnerability that the lone individual faces in a sometimes hostile world. The axe may be the tool by which the individual liberates themselves from the collective, but it is also the cruel weapon of the primordial mother as castrator, the limiting force with which the warlike figures of this decan wrestle. This is the essence of this face—the individual yang struggling out of the collective yin.

Historically, many of the images associated with this decan have pictured a dark man. Being the first decan of the zodiac in the reckoning of many systems, the individual personality has not had time to develop. There is only being and doing. Thus is the figure dark, for the spirit has not yet coalesced into a socialized personality, and the actions are as yet unfiltered. There is a raw will here, savage yet naïve—the tyrannical spirit of the infant. Yet it is important to note that the untamed nature of these drives is not intentionally cruel. It is merely the will pressing reality to conform with its pattern.

Though fierce, the figures seen in this face are not always successful—as theirs is an unsubtle force, and some trials require the wits of tricksters rather than the sword-arms of warriors. By engaging in contests of will, those who travel this decan may have to submit to those who best them in this game. Indeed, it is often the first lesson of the dominant personality to experience the other side of the duad they continuously recreate. There is a tendency in this decan to try to do too much with force alone. Not comprehending the subtle cycles of the world, karmic debts accumulate quickly, calling to the destroying mother to come, axe in hand.

The raw assertion of individual being found here has several magical

uses. It may be tapped in order to sever contacts and break bonds which no longer serve. One might also direct this force to a portion of their environment which is out of control. There is a power to bring subjective order to the world here—to chop down trees, to cut a path through the jungle. As demonstrated by some of the traditional lore on this decan, the raw power which burns here can also be turned on an enemy to dire effect.

In the reds and blacks of this face lies the root of personal power—the untamed and unrestrained will. Though necessary for all great works, its nature is contrary to civilized world. Those born into this face and those who tap its power should both be wary of swatting flies with battle axes.

### *Saturn in Aries I*

SATURN in this decan offers a terrifying vision of authority to the native. Karma will tend to assert itself in a forceful, sometimes brutal, manner. It may be difficult for them to move beyond a core belief that might makes right. This position can make tyrants, as well as anarchists. The native will feel compelled to take on great projects requiring tremendous responsibility in order to prove themselves. Those born with this configuration often learn the hard way, but have the unique strength to bear the weight of those lessons.

An image of Saturn in this decan might be impressed in order to evoke the karma another is due in an immediate and fiery form. One could also do the same with oneself to evoke their adversary or nemesis, thereby expediting karmic processing.

### *Jupiter in Aries I*

THOSE born with the star of Zeus in this face of Aries are often gifted with an abundance of raw power of personality. The life lessons they encounter serve to liberate more and more energy from within. They come to understand the power of independence and personal sovereignty, and have the ability to kindle this virtue in other people. This position is more fortunate within the bounds of Jupiter.

When Jupiter is in Aries' first face, one may impress this image in order to call forth opportunities for greater independence of spirit and action. Ju-

piter here may also be evoked in order to sever an existing relationship in an advantageous yet generous manner. Jupiter's temperate nature offsets the natural harshness of this face, and thus can be utilized for separations calling for less severity.

### *Mars in Aries I*

UNIVERSALLY considered the ruler of this face, Mars here is potent, but harsh. The natives born under the red planet in this face have an abundance of martial virtues, being able to identify and solve problems with great ease. As this face's essential formulae is one of separation, working with others may be difficult for the natives, as their power comes from self-reliance, not team work. Many born here will need to undergo a significant psychological separation from a controlling or otherwise emotionally limiting mother-figure in order to embody this position's full power.

Mars here energizes all of the essential qualities of this face. It's proper impression on a ring or seal can unlock deep reserves of martial power and the virtue of self reliance. Proper communion with the power that resides here enables one to carve their own path through the real. Nonetheless, the axe clutched in this decan does not distinguish between the flesh of people and trees, so care must be taken to wield it wisely.

### *Sun in Aries I*

THE Sun is well placed here, as it is our star's traditional sign of exaltation. Those born with Sol in this decan are very independent, and life will bring them many chances to prove their power against hostile circumstances. There is a certain rough glory to those born with the Sun here—the halo of a barbarian regent. Though they may believe that their primary challenge is to establish an abundance of raw personal power, their true difficulty is in learning that one, no matter how potent, is sometimes not a sufficient number.

When the Sun's rays shine through this decan, images of warrior kings and queens dance. A talisman might be inscribed with them, drawing to it the spirit of fierce independence and autonomy. A piece of this sort is a boon

to entrepreneurs and those who make their way through the world by the strength of their own acts. A single working might also be designed here to invigorate oneself with a draught of this virtue.

### *Venus in Aries I*

VENUS is out of her element in the first decan of Aries. The rams' sign is her traditional detriment, and flowers have a hard time taking root in its scorched soil. Joy and anger flare bright and then subside. When aflame, these natives are both resplendent and terrifying. Yet many of those born with Venus here have a difficult time with the compromise necessary in relationships. They understand dominance and submission, but unless other features of the birth chart provide, they have a difficult time with more nuanced power relations. Going solo is often much simpler for these natives than managing a relationship. This common difficulty with equitable relationships is ironic, as the independence and brightness of spirit that those born with Venus here regularly possess is quite magnetic.

In this harsh decan, Venus can offer little connective or reconciliatory power. When her gorgeous light pours through it, she illuminates figures of raw potency. There is thus a halo of glory here, a decidedly masculine glamour which can be anchored with the right image and material.

### *Mercury in Aries I*

THE mind grows fierce and sharp in the first face of Aries. The intellect of these natives is decidedly independent, often hostile to outside opinions. When bonafied there is a raw brilliance which excuses its flaws, but even then, this position is often accompanied with an argumentative and opinionated air. The greatest values of this position are its independence, the potential for truly fresh, original thinking and the innovative use of language. These natives also often display great strategic intelligence.

Though it lends its natives a certain ability, Mercury in the first face of Aries does not lend itself to many magical uses. A talisman for independence of thought might be created here, though the argumentative and opinionated qualities which accompany the natal position are unavoidable. Its best

use may be as a single working for victory in a debate or similarly linguistic contest.

### *Moon in Aries I*

LUNA finds herself in an awkward position here. The Moon in the natal chart indicates what the native draws sustenance from—where they drink in what is most needed. The bloody fight for independence makes this decan a hard one for the Moon to take root in. There often develops, over time, a wonderful emotional self-reliance, but these natives have a difficult time creating and maintaining supportive relationships with others, especially those relationships which place the natives in a position of vulnerability. Those born with the Moon here are predisposed to active life styles, and must make sure they do not push themselves to exhaustion.

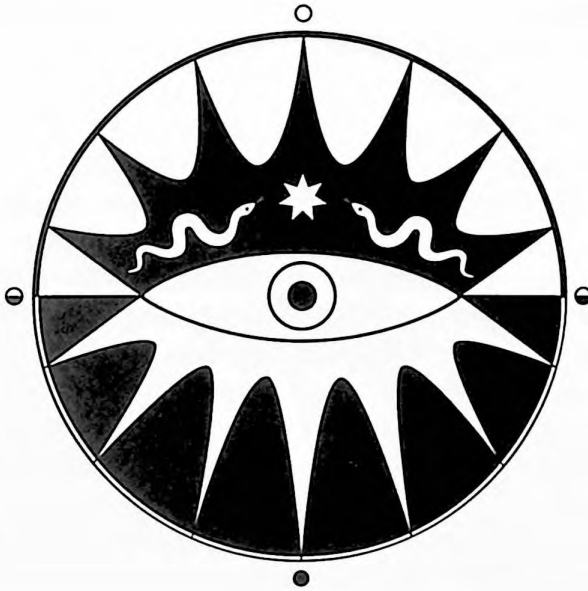
An image of the Moon here might serve to quicken stagnant energies, but there is otherwise little to recommend Luna in this face—the energies of the face and the planet are at cross purposes.





## ARIES II: THE CROWN

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THIS is a royal face, for it is here that the Sun's traditional degree of exaltation is found. Here the individual struggles with their potential—what is truly royal inside them.

The focal point of this decan is the world which emanates from an individual. This reality field results from the qualities which they choose to embody. The Tarot card syncretized with this decan in the Golden Dawn system is the Three of Wands, whose title, "Virtue," offers a clue as to its meaning.

All virtues and vices are habits. Neither are not generated in a day, or left behind in a moment. They come to define not only character, but the interaction of the character with the world around it. Given time, one's virtues and vices come to define their lives. Indeed, the world remembers one for little else but these two.

The practice of virtue and vice therefore define a character. Luminous potential hardens in the scaffolding of practice, like gold cast, stretched and worked. Thus the potential becomes the royal regalia, the crown jewels of one's personal world. Though the history of morality is over-run with lists



of virtues and vices, their mixture and proportion within a given person is always unique, and from these endless admixtures arise a billion worlds.

The figures of this face are always royal, for all emanate a world of their own making, though they may not understand the process by which they generate it. Through contemplation of this face we see the deep sovereignty all have over the nature of their world.

Though this face reveals profound truths about the process by which a personal world is generated, it does not speak to a particular type, for all realms proceed from the sovereign self, which radiates a complete mandala of heavens, hells and human realms.

Though it is the self which generates these worlds, one does not abide in them alone. The world-field generated draws those of like vibration, characters able to live out the stories written on the stage provided.

Those who intentionally generate their own world always find it stocked with refugees and settlers. Thus those seen in this face are leaders—for they are followed. Their actions and decisions are imitated, their vices and virtues copied.

*Liber Hermetis* names the ruler of this decan *Tzabaoth*, one of the Hebrew god-names used commonly in Kabbalah. It is generally translated as “Lord of Hosts.” The attribution of this God-name to this decan attests to the burden of leadership which often falls upon the shoulders of the creator. Those who would create a world are responsible for the direction those who reside within it.

Applied magically, this decan has tremendous power. It is the power to generate the world of your choosing, and to be its sovereign. It is the key to creating pocket realities which do not obey the laws of the collective reality field in which they exist.

### *Saturn in Aries II*

SATURN is difficult in this decan for its natives. It delays their ability to structure their own reality. Natives will, often up to and past their first Saturn return, feel perpetually stuck inside a reality not of their making. Their power and charisma is constrained until they have accomplished a successful deconstruction of the reality they inherited and reconstruct it in an authentic manner.

As a magical formulae, there is little to recommend a talisman for this placement. With it serving primarily to imprison the spirit, it would function best as malefica. Still, contemplative works might be arranged to map the structure of those factors in one's reality which bind the spirit inauthentically.

### *Jupiter in Aries II*

JUPITER makes the workings of this decan fortunate for the native. There is an ability here to spread a personal vision of reality far beyond its creator. The natives who have this position, unafflicted, have the ability to grant their point of view an infectious quality. The world views generated under these conditions tend toward the positive, though that positivity may only extend to the person generating it.

Magically, Jupiter's presence in this decan offers the ability to expand one's fame or reputation, particularly by the hallowing of accomplishments, or the attribution of heroic qualities to one's character. The impression of a more permanent magical image of this type may, however, create expectations of the possessor which are difficult to consistently live up to.

### *Mars in Aries II*

MARS in this decan is the archetypal general, able to lead people into and through the conflicted realms. A person with this configuration must, however, be careful that they do not create wars around them, as conflicts will tend to spring up around them like small, spontaneous combustions. Though the native may be victorious in the conflicts they enter into, those conflicts may, themselves, be pointless. The danger here is mistaking the general for the king.

The image of this decan may be used to give victory in a competitive or hostile situation. It is of particular use to those in positions of leadership in competitive industries.

### *Sun in Aries II*

THE Sun is considered the ruler of this decan in multiple systems, as it contains the Sun's traditional degree of exaltation—19 Aries. Those with the Sun in this decan evidence the powers of leadership attributed to this decan and often possess the ability to create a reality and impose it on the world around them. Those with heavily afflicted Suns will feel the opposite is true, and may feel trapped in worlds not of their making. It is of great importance that these natives strive to uncover their true nature, for it is there that their lost power resides.

The image of this decan is one of the most potent of the 36. Executed under the right election, and with the proper materials, it can bestow kingships of many sorts, as well as glean the favor of those in power. Results will be limited if one desires sovereignty in a realm to which they have no claim. Less ambitious work can be performed here to aid in the projection of personality, or other works of presence.

### *Venus in Aries II*

VENUS is in her traditional detriment in Aries, and thus the natives are prone to encounter difficulties in her sphere. Those born with Venus in this decan may have desires which far exceed their ability to satisfy them. Nonetheless, if these wild roses can be trimmed back, there is a power here to create an aesthetic continuity to reality, to knit together life's many elements with an artistic flourish. These natives often have the ability to incite lust in others, and many are adept at seducing others to enter their reality. If badly afflicted, there may be a terminal distaste for the entirety of lived reality.

Though it may be of some use in addressing issues born of low self regard, Venus is generally weak in this decan, and it is not recommended for a permanent talisman.

### *Mercury in Aries II*

THOSE born with Mercury in this decan often have a very characteristic mode of thought and communication. Their thoughts, speech and writing

often have a very idiosyncratic voice. Being so distinct, there is an ability to get others to hear their point of view. If afflicted, the attainment or recovery of their true voice may be central struggle.

An image can be constructed for this decan which aids one in getting attention for their point of view. Such an item would be an aid in persuasion, enticing others to think about the world in the manner that the possessor does.

### *Moon in Aries II*

THE Moon's placement here can be difficult for the native. They are naturally very receptive to the worldviews of others, and it can be difficult to hold their reality steady around forceful people. Nonetheless, they often find great comfort and shelter in the haloes of other people. They must learn to cultivate and defend the reality that is rightfully theirs. The natives often feel comfortable displaying royal virtues and noble emotional states, yet this very proclivity may make it difficult for them to admit to their lapses in character.

The Moon has little purchase on the terrain of this decan, and so the construction of permanent images or seals is discouraged. However, ritual work might be done with this placement when the Moon is waxing and unafflicted in order to gain the protection of a powerful individual or to reaffirm sovereignty over one's reality. Contrarily, work might be done when the Moon wanes to remove oneself from the influence of another's reality.



## ARIES III: THE BURNING ROSE

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IN this face we see the power of art to overcome hostility. This is the power of the dancer, the stand up comedian and the lecturer to charm a hostile audience. While the first decan of Aries involves a focus on victory in competitive or hostile relationships, and the second the establishment of conscious sovereignty over personal reality, the third decan's scope extends outward in a more social direction. The spirit, which established independence in the first decan and rulership in the second, here shines before many, setting fire to the hearts of all who bear witness.

This is the power of the spirit to unify and seduce, to motivate and to bond those of confluent passions. The action of this decan, which is according to one system Venusian, another Jupiterian—is classically benefic, yet it requires the martial heat of the battlefield.

A number of visions dance across this face. The performer stands before a hostile crowd, the sergeant crouches with his troops in a bunker while artillery rains down, a hippy places a rose into the barrel of a loaded gun. In all cases, it is the potential conflict which galvanizes this face's power to unify.

There is a remarkable potency here—to create a commonality of spirit even in the most hostile conditions. Yet the bonds that form here often require that intensity to endure. The bond shared by military men, the celebrated *esprit de corps*, decays outside of war's pressures. The audience members soon forget the performers who so moved them. In love's battlefield, once the friction and fire of the first conjunctio, with its terror and elation, have subsided, the lamp of raw passion burns low. A less volatile fuel is required for the flame to continue on.

In *The 36 Airts of the Zodiac*, a fragmentary Hellenistic text, this face is given to Eros, ancestor of cupid and deity of erotic desire. While some texts ascribe primordial origins to Eros, his attribution to this face more likely refers to his role as Aphrodite's troubling son. Eros' arrows pierced the hearts of god and human alike, setting each aflame with desire. These love stories, like many seen in this face, did not all end in harmonious union. Instead, from many arose disastrous dramas of passion over-indulged.

Eros' escapades make clear that the desire for unification is inflamed by separation, love by war, lust by forbiddance. With the flames of war so surges the heart.

The difficulty for those who walk the territory these images enclose is to understand when the passion which fuels a relationship is created wholly by the intensity of circumstance. Peeking through the window of this face, we can see the lovers trapped in the second circle of Dante's *Inferno*, their union unable to exist outside the chaotic and destructive winds of their own passion.

Yet this face offers no curse—one must simply understand the limitations of its power. There are peak experiences here, inspiring unions amidst life's greatest struggles. Yet the one who walks these scenes must understand that these experiences do not promise anything of the future, and that fact is part and parcel of their glory. The rose shines most brightly when it is on fire.

It is thus the burning rose which exemplifies this decan's power. Embodied, it grants the charisma to motivate and attract. When its light is called toward a particular situation, bonds are forged and spirits raised.



### *Saturn in Aries III*

IN this face of Aries, Saturn volatilizes the relationship between performer and audience. Both fear and achievement charge the prospect of appearing before others. For many, the first chapter of life will exhibit an oscillation between avoiding groups and feeling trapped in front of them, forced to perform a caricature of the self. The need for love is complicated by the need to seduce. The excitation of desire this face evokes conjures passing blooms of adoration, but on its own provides little foundation for enduring bonds. It is important these natives learn the laws upon which passion operates.

One should beware committing this image to a permanent talisman. It is essentially a binding to the realm of self-performance, and in most senses falls more properly into the category of malefica. Saturn in this decan essentially bids one to dance for Kronus, the devourer. As such, its harsh light may be called on a temporary basis to understand and work through stage fright. The reaper and the burning rose can also be invoked to enflame the heart in the most dire situations, such as rallying the morale of a squad under fire. There is wisdom here, and strength, but it emerges only out of ordeal.

### *Jupiter in Aries III*

IN the triplicity system of planetary correspondence, the third face of Aries is ruled by Jupiter. Here a viewpoint, philosophy or religion is performed—the antics and method of the preacher and stand up comedian. Supported by other factors, this is a good position for gaining recognition and fame. If the position is unafflicted and prominent, the native brings others to their point of view and gains acclaim easily, but is often subject to ego distortion and addiction to the regard of their audience.

The image of one adored by many might be inscribed to advance the promulgation and acceptance of one's beliefs, or to increase the reach of whatever art one performs. Once impressed upon the life, though, the challenges of ego distortion which attend the natal position are sure to follow. A less temporary invocation of this decan's power can serve to bless a given performance, and a contemplative rite will provide insight into how to most effectively share one's beliefs.



### *Sun in Aries III*

THE Sun is in its exaltation in Aries, and thus while it has no additional dignity in this face, it is strong and capable here, capable of energizing all of the core themes. Unless severely afflicted, there is a strong ability to project the personality in a dramatic fashion. The natives often feel a need test their abilities against groups of people and are often drawn to performance arts such as dance, drama, or comedy. The powers of motivation found here also give birth to team leaders in a variety of fields. Just as they are able to set fire to others' hearts, the natives of this decan are easily inflamed themselves. When moments of high passion do not endure, they are inevitably disappointed.

As a magical formula, the Sun in this decan can help a person overcome stagefright, as well as allow greater power and authenticity in performance.

### *Venus in Aries III*

CONSIDERED the ruler of this face by the descending order method, Venus is indeed strong here. These natives are often magnetic, with a pronounced ability to seduce and inflame. Yet lasting unions may be a challenge, as those born with Venus here are wont to chase conflicting passions. There is an ability to glamorize and mythologize the self here which is an asset in the hands of artists, yet may burn too hot to sit comfortably in the native's personal life. The high point, the moment of glory, is elevated for these natives, and the mind may become inordinately attached to it. Some become so acclimated to the heat of myth and passion that they are unable to tolerate the more temperate zones in which much of life occurs.

This image, when properly impressed into the flesh of the world, may serve to make its bearer more prominent and magnetic. A type of glamour, this talisman will tend to warp perceptions about the bearer, bending the light so as to shine upon moments of glory. The danger, as with all glammers, is that the wearer's own vision of themselves is likewise bent. Venus' power here can also be directed outside of the self, lending an object or entity a wreath of glory.

### *Mercury in Aries III*

ONE born to this position comes to know the tricks of performance and perception well. They are clever in the way that they present their words, and know what emotional impact their words will have upon others. Yet this capacity for dramatization may be abused, used to conceal a vain intellect. It is important for them to remember that the value of statements and ideas is not wholly determined by their persuasive force.

This image may be properly impressed to glamourize one's words or ideas. A contemplative rite might be performed to gain greater understanding of how people interpret the quality of another's thoughts. Insight into intellectual glammers is to be found while Mercury walks this face, both how to weave them as well as the methods by which one might cut their fabric.

### *Moon in Aries III*

THE Moon in this position grants a dramatic, charming personality, but one that can easily become emotionally dependent on eliciting a reaction from others. These people tend to perform their emotions in order to understand them, processing things outside themselves, which may necessitate the often unwilling participation of those in the native's life. There is an emotional need to appear in others' eyes as one's own ego ideal. A difficult task, to be sure.

The Moon does not have enough dignity in this face to merit a permanent talisman, but suffices to aid in various forms of ego-magic. An image might be impressed when the Moon is waxing to anchor or strengthen a particular image of the self. This is essentially an act of intentionally structuring ego-consciousness. Conversely, when the Moon wanes, one may "disrobe" from the same images.



## TAURUS I: THE PLOW

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WITHIN the three phases of Aries, an individual distinguished themselves from the collective, created a world and celebrated its splendor. Now, in the first face of Taurus, great unplowed fields loom, and we must contemplate the mighty task of civilizing it and making it productive.

The prospect of this labor is clear in the Medieval and Renaissance images of this decan, which show a man at a plow, ready to begin the cultivation of the land. The implements of war seen in the Aries decans have been beaten into plowshares here.

Thus this face is traditionally connected to all of the sciences necessary to draw forth fruit from the land. The plow, which breaks open the soil, is one of it's most enduring symbols, but not the sum thereof. In this face we gaze upon the ways that we might make use of our world. Understanding our resources wisely, we consider how we might multiply their value.

It is important to note that fields are in most cases not literal. The mind, heart and body are all ripe fields, which offer abundance when cultivated. The power this decan grants is that of understanding how to create growth,

how to achieve abundance. Its use reveals the ways one may work with whatever one has to gain more.

Yet the tarot card allotted to the first decan of Taurus in the Golden Dawn system is the Five of Pentacles, called "Material Trouble" in *Book T* and "Worry" in Crowley's *Book of Thoth*. In the Rider Waite deck, an image of desolation threatens—a crippled beggar walks exposed through winter's snows, outside the protective confines of a church. Yet this image is not a scene that this decan produces, but instead a fear it inspires. When the cold wind blows and the elements turn against you, what will you have? Without the worried visions which proceed from this question, there would be no reason to engage in the mental labor of planning or the physical work of plowing. Plans must be laid to generate the surplus necessary to guard against lean times.

Worry compels the residents of this decan to their labor, but it is the many distracting pleasures which abide here which are the true threat to the soil's abundant promise. A fragmentary Hellenistic text, *The 36 Airs of the Zodiac*, locates within this decan the Kharites, the "Charities" or "Graces." This retinue of lovely ladies embody grace, beauty, adornment, mirth, dance, song and life's other pleasures. As the wanton Kharites do not withhold their gifts from the idle, there is a great temptation in their presence to waste what one possesses, spending the future on passing mirth.

Ironically, it is by premature embrace of the Kharites that the fear vision seen in the Five of Pentacles comes to pass. For those who do not plant and harvest, the nightmare becomes all too real, and the experience of scarcity is a cyclical certainty.

Yet it is too Puritan to conclude that the essence of this decan is merely an embrace of toil. The worry pictured in the five of pentacles and the sweet lassitude of the Kharites are both necessary, and the true work of this decan is in the equilibration of work and pleasure.

It is worth noting that the Moon's degree of exaltation occurs within this decan, which suggests that the work of plowing and planting pictured is the key to creating the most fecund and supportive of foundations.

### *Saturn in Taurus I*

THOSE born with Saturn here often have a block in regard to planning during their youth. The process of laying out the future in steps often seems to

them a fruitless endeavor, requiring impossible amounts of labor and being subject to the uncontrollable rages of the elements. As age makes clear, it is important for them to sit and consider how to plow and what to plant so that their futures are not wholly subject to chance.

The image of this face can be used to bind oneself to the necessities of planning and the labor involved therein. A figure bound to a plow should be sufficient to accomplish this. The image of this face might also be impressed with dread Saturn as the plowman to bring obstacles into another's path. An appropriate image would be stones in the field.

### *Jupiter in Taurus I*

WHEN Jupiter is placed in the first face of Taurus, the native will have an abundance of plans to turn what they have in to more. What is more, many of these natives have the good fortune to obtain ripe fields with which to work. Nonetheless, many of these natives are easily seduced by idle pleasures, and more than a few waste the opportunities they are privy to. It is important that they learn that the land will not work itself, no matter how fecund.

The image of this face may be used to attract ideal conditions for cultivation. A charm of this sort should be anchored to a particular plan, blessing its intended course of events.

### *Mars in Taurus I*

MARS has a difficult time in the first face of Taurus. The red planet's bombastic nature is ill suited to the patience and thoughtful planning required here. The slow pace of this decan often leads to boredom, and they may find themselves dreaming of ways to circumvent labors. Hastily conceived plans are thus a temptation for natives. It is important for them to learn to pace themselves, distributing their energy evenly over an extended period of time. Though this natal impatience is a vice, if properly refined, they may be able quicken processes by cutting away inefficiencies. A tractor can accomplish what an ox cannot.

Mars' power in this decan is of questionable value for talismanic work. Being primarily malefic, it engenders impatience with plans and attracts ob-

stacles to them. Contemplation of Mars in this decan can, however, yield an understanding of the vices which impede the process of fructification.

### *The Sun in TAURUS I*

THE SUN here brings the native's attention to the importance of planning, yet this very focus often creates an apprehensive personality. The tension between pleasure, planning and worry is a central concern for these natives, and it is critical that they learn to equilibrate these passions. If afflicted, there may well be an over-reliance on ignoble schemes rather than a measured appraisal of what one has and how to make the best use of it.

The Sun illuminates, and thus an image of Sol above the fields will help to bring greater awareness of what is worth cultivating. The sunlight which shines here is not only instructive, but is one of the key ingredients in the agricultural process itself. Yet by itself it is insufficient, and an excess of attention with a deficiency of action engenders a neurotic state. The Sun here is thus useful when the solar component is lacking, and can therefore serve a temporary purpose, but is not recommended for a permanent talisman.

### *Venus in Taurus I*

THOSE born with Venus in the first face of Taurus and unafflicted will rarely have to labor hard to achieve abundance. This position allows for the easy multiplication of wealth. Those thusly born will do well in the trade of valuables, such as jewelry or antiques. The natural predisposition toward luxuries can be an impediment, though, for the native may be slow to develop the virtue of industry. This potential problem is of especial worry when the natal Venus is afflicted in this decan. In these cases, the native may be treated by Fortune's wheel to periods of the easy life, followed by seasons of want and need.

The magical use of this decan is to bring about opportunities to multiply wealth. It is especially useful and appropriate for those who trade in valuables and for those whose business is a matter of investment and speculation.



### *Mercury in Taurus I*

MERCURY is considered by some to be at home here. Those born with Mercury in this decan will have an excellent capacity for planning and a fine understanding of the resources they have at their disposal. Nonetheless, many will also be subject to nervousness and driven by fear, especially if the position is afflicted. The key here is to move beyond motivation by fear and learn to plan for the future.

A talisman of Mercury in this face may be created to obtain the intellectual power necessary to make effective plans and to ascertain the correct methods to multiply wealth.

### *Moon in Taurus I*

THE MOON finds her exaltation in this decan of Taurus. Those born here are often blessed with wonderful resources, which may range from fecund lands to the metaphorical fecundity of a ripe mind or heart. The natives do not necessarily understand the value of their resources, though, and it may take some time for them to recognize what they have and bring it to fruition. They are also slothful, and prone to indulge themselves in life's finer pleasures without adequate planning for the future. Developing a long term perspective and the discipline to act on it is key for them.

The image of the Moon in this decan may be used to attain a ripe parcel of land, business loan, or otherwise obtain the base matter one needs to begin the process of fructification.



## TAURUS II: A LINGA-YONI

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HORN-HEADED and cow-footed humanoids roam the early representations of this decan, promising wealth and beastly fecundity, while later images, such as Agrippa's, show a man with the key to success itself. In the Six of Pentacles, syncretized with this face, a rich man, gripping the scale of the just, offers alms to the poor. While in the first decan of Taurus we encountered a fear-tainted vision of poverty and the necessity of working the land, here a potent formula is revealed—the results of virtue practiced over time.

In tropical decanic schemes, the heart of this decan holds the point exactly between the vernal equinox and the summer solstice: the cross-quarter festival of Beltane, also celebrated as May Day or Earth Day. Halfway through the spring season in the northern hemisphere, these festivals recognize that the growing strength of the Sun has fecundated the Earth, which has in turn grown ripe. Thus is the procreative union of Sun and Earth celebrated, its symbolism veiled to whatever degree is necessary to avoid vulgarity. A brief review of the images of this decan reveal this seasonal symbolism to be essential. Working the land is mentioned in both Ibn Ezra's images as well as

those of the *Picatrix*. Ibn Ezra's offers a vision of a bestial man and woman, and warns that the man is "very hot and gluttonous," and yet he also "builds the land" and "drives the oxen to plant and sow." Building and sowing are themes repeated in the *Picatrix*.

Though Medieval and later depictions of this face censor the sexual elements, this decan is rife with procreative unions. The Sun's rays penetrate and warm the Earth, just as the plow divides the fields, making them ready to receive the seed. Accounts abound of the licentious pagan rituals practiced at this time.

Though the meaning of such festivities suggests wanton fertilization, later images, such as the key-holding figure in Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* and the just man pictured in the Rider Waite deck's Six of Pentacles suggest that the lasciviousness is coupled with more civilized virtues.

The fecund but unquicken earth, the alchemical salt, is visited by the bright and active beams of the Sun, the sulphur. Their union is a conception repeated yearly. Yet the matter is not brought to fruition solely by means of a single conjunction, no matter how vigorous. Once planted, the matter must be attended to carefully and consistently. One cannot decide to water a plant when one chooses, nor can one make up for neglect by a double application of effort the next day. Consistency and dedication must join fecundity and passion to complete the picture this face provides.

The 36 *Airs of the Zodiac*, a fragmentary Hellenistic text, associates the Horae with this decan. The Horae ("Hours") were a trinity of Goddesses who were responsible for the regular motion of all things. They were especially associated with the wheel of the heavens and the rotation of seasons. They were venerated in connection to agriculture, where attunement with the natural order was vital. Yet they were also associated with the character traits which lead to a successful life—peace, order and justice.

Devotion to the *Horae* civilizes the procreative forces of this decan, revealing the "key" to success pictured in Agrippa's image. Passion is necessary for continuing fructification, but those raw powers must be tempered by means of an ordered effort. Unfrozen from fresco and tanka, a tantric union moves slowly, rhythmically in this face. The partners do not race to climax—they breathe deeply and undulate in slow motion. Their union and its fruits are both eternal and temporal.

This is the formula promised by the title of the Six of Pentacles, "Success."—the power to bring any matter to fruition. For those lucky recipients

of this wisdom and its rewards, the altruism pictured in the Six of Pentacles is a karmic necessity. When the rich do not give to the poor, society breaks down. The greatest alms are not coins, though. It is the knowledge of how all success is achieved—passion and discipline merged in rhythmic union. All great works are brought to completion through its observance.

### *Saturn in Taurus II*

IN this face, Saturn hardens the rhythm of work and play, concretizing the formulae into a strict regimen. Those born with Kronos here may find expectations of hard work and great material success forced on them in their youth. Rebellion is not an unlikely possibility, with natives spurning the wisdom of this decan. Meanwhile, others born with Kronos here may find themselves the slave of their own success, the rhythm of work and play a cage. For them, deviation from this pattern is a step outside their comfort zone, engendering fear. These natives need time to understand the proper alternation of work and pleasure. Their successes are therefore likely to be delayed until later in life.

Saturn's residence in this face makes for an especially useful binding. By impressing the image of this decan and tying it to one's person, one may connect oneself to the virtuous rhythm of work and play. Such a self-binding cages one in a discipline they might not otherwise possess. Such fetters can be used like a trellis, to guide organic growth, but they must eventually be disposed of lest they lead to deformity.

### *Jupiter in Taurus II*

THOSE born with Jupiter in the second face of Taurus see the wisdom of a life well divided between work and play. Unafflicted, Jupiter here offers a practical sagacity on how to live a life both fruitful and pleasurable. If afflicted, such pragmatic enlightenments still occur, but come entangled with emotional issues or corrupted by greed and laziness. Though Jupiter in the second face of Taurus offers a wonderful perspective on living a pleasing and productive life, the natives often have some difficulty seeing beyond the veil, and spiritual practices which have non-attachment as a necessary prerequi-

site may be inordinately challenging.

Jupiter's time in the second face of Taurus is sufficient fuel for a variety of blessings. Health and wealth-the goodness of the manifest world, can be approached fruitfully here. A talisman will, however, not have the power to draw these things into the life on its own, but its influence will guide the mind of its possessor with the wisdom which makes it possible to manifest them on their own.

### *Mars in Taurus II*

THOSE born with Mars in the second decan of Taurus oscillate between restlessness and lassitude. As Mars is in his traditional detriment here, the natives rarely find that their energy level meets the tasks life requires of them. Contentious behavior may upset the ideal rhythm one day, while sloth on another. Those born with Mars here need to make a conscious effort to move at the pace that their work demands. Crops cannot be watered twice in a day, nor can one skip a day of tending to them. Those whose Mars position is adequately bonafied, however, will evidence both consistency and endurance.

There is little to recommend Mars in this face for positive work. The red planet disrupts and interferes with the gentle tantra this decan is concerned with. This discordant combination can, nonetheless, be mobilized for a situation which calls for such disharmony.

### *Sun in Taurus II*

THOSE born with the Sun in the second decan of Taurus have a natural grasp of what is required to succeed in earthly matters. They build up an individualized understanding and preferred rhythm, and adhere stubbornly to that idiosyncratic method. Generous, pleased and productive when they are able to do things in the manner that they prefer, they dislike disruptions to their pattern, sometimes to point of resisting necessary adaptations. These natives need to learn that life's pace does not always suit their own, and that although it is important to hold in mind the ideal way of doing things, it is not always possible.

The Sun in this decan is a fine time to begin works which one intends to

see through until success is attained. A talisman properly made at this time offers to its possessor the virtues of perseverance, orderliness, patience.

### *Venus in Taurus II*

VENUS luxuriates in this decan, for no planet enjoys the fruits of success more than Aphrodite. Those born with Venus in this decan are, especially if the position is unafflicted, likely to be treated to the sweet grapes of others' labor. These natives are drawn to luxury, and luxury to them. Most develop a refined taste for edibles, as well as aesthetics. Venus knows what she wants, and when placed in this decan, often gets it. The natives may, however, find themselves in a karmically untenable position if they indulge themselves with the illusion of entitlement. Those with Venus here but afflicted by a contrary body may find that their tastes greatly exceed their means. Conversely, they may feel ashamed at their hunger for finer things, and maintain a dishonest relationship with themselves.

Venus' time in the second decan of Taurus offers an array of viable magical uses. Wealth charms and romantic glours are both particularly effective here, provided Venus is not impeded. Made properly, a talisman impressed with the power of Venus in this decan will draw both wealth and affection toward the bearer. Yet the possessor must remember not to hoard love or valuables at others' expense. The one who receives has a responsibility that the giver does not.

### *Mercury in Taurus II*

WHEN Mercury is in the second face of Taurus, the mind is orderly but not necessarily swift. Those born with the messenger here understand how processes break down into different phases. They conceptualize sequences well, and are thus able to make effective long term plans if other factors do not interfere. This orientation toward longer trajectories may, however, produce an inability to see outside of a process which they are currently involved in, and an unwillingness to change direction, even if they are plodding along a road to nowhere. Due to this, changes tend to come suddenly, or not at all. These natives need to learn to be thoughtful about which processes they



commit themselves to, and accept that when marching down the wrong road, perseverance is not a virtue.

Mercury is said by some to be the ruler of this decan, and his presence here may be turned to a variety of ends. Though a talisman anchoring one to an orderly balance of work and pleasure could be obtained during the messenger's pass, the power of Mercury in this face is most effectively tied to a particular process. Properly attached to one, the sequence in question will unfold on a more orderly schedule, and those involved will be naturally drawn into a fitting rhythm.

### *Moon in Taurus II*

THE Moon is exalted in Taurus, and truly potent in this decan, which the bulk of the Western tradition contends that it rules. Those born with the Moon here have natures which are drawn to the fine balance of work and play. Both hard working and appreciative by nature, if the Moon is unafflicted, they are able to bring a wide variety of matters to fruition, bringing great success. Generous, their prosperity becomes that of their loved ones. Nonetheless, the Moon in this decan is naturally indulgent, and prone to the excesses of success. Those born under this Moon must guard against complacency, and remember to challenge themselves.

The Moon is potent in the middle decan of Taurus. The image, suitably impressed at a particularly well augured time, offers its bearer the art and science of slow but steady triumph in all manifest arenas. Waxing, a talisman can be made for the success of any material endeavor. Waning, the Moon in this face is suitable to banish or purge those qualities and habits which prevent one from obtaining success.



## TAURUS III: A STRING OF PRAYER BEADS

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FROM the third decan of Taurus comes forth unsettling images. Pig and bull-headed figures promise toil, destruction and poverty in the works of Ibn Ezra. Meanwhile Agrippa, in his *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, guarantees misery and slavery, yet also necessity and profit. Hellenistic, Arabic, Indian and later European images of this decan all bear the mark of Saturn, ruler of the face in both the descending order and triplicity methods of assigning planetary rulership.

While in the first decan of Taurus great plans were laid and in the second, success was obtained, the third represents a confrontation with destructive factors which impede completion. Flood, drought, and pestilence enter here to ravage what has been planted. The dark titans of nature must be reckoned with. Yet the same storms stir within the individual's breast, as well.

This decan shows victims of circumstance and hubris, and offers images of their subsequent destitution. Yet such ruin is never final, for the good spirits of the Litai reside here. Attributed to this decan in *The 36 Aires of the Zodiac*, a fragmentary Hellenistic astrological text, the Litai are a group of

daimones whose name can be translated to "prayer." They carry the litanies of the miserable to the ears of the gods themselves for remediation. Yet the full meaning of the Litai is not clear without comparison to the being to whom they were traditionally juxtaposed, the dread daimona Ate.

Ate, "Ruin" or "Folly," daughter of Eris, was a troublesome spirit, who for her crimes in the heavens was cast from them by Zeus. Yet she did not fall all the way to earth. Instead she landed upon the heads of men, whom she uses as stepping stones, bringing ruin and inspiring folly upon whoever's cranium she treads. Her connection to this decan of Taurus is further illustrated by a story told in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*. At Hera's request, Ate persuades the boy Ampelus, whom Dionysus loves passionately, to ride a fierce bull in order to impress his divine lover. Foolish Ampelus dies in the attempt, bringing tragedy to Dionysus. After she was cast from the heavens, Ate's work continued, tempting the vanity of mortals and bringing ruin far and wide. But the Litai followed in her wake, ready to offer restoration and redemption to those willing to offer their words to the powers above.

Yet the Ate-Litai duad presupposes agency—a temptation to folly which is not always present in the action of this decan. The iteration of this decan in the Rider Waite tarot, the Seven of Pentacles, shows a man leaning on the crook blade of his hoe, watching his crops. Though he has planned, planted and labored, there is little that he can do to change the result now. His virtue will not guard his work from storms or floods, draughts or wildfires. The end result is in hands larger than his own. Sometimes catastrophe befalls us through no apparent fault of our own. The wise acknowledge what is revealed here, and make plans to accommodate the unforeseen. Apotropaic magics ward off evil and insurance policies remediate it. Wisdom, patience, humility and foresight are the unexpected fruits of the destructive forces which prowl this face. Thus while the duality of ruin and restoration is in some cases self-caused, such a narrow view misses the larger lessons made visible here.

It is interesting to note that in tropical schemes, two prominent fixed stars currently reside within this decan. The first of these is dread Caput Algol, the winking head of the Medusa and the most infamous of the malefic stars. Yet a handful of degrees later comes another potent asterism—the Pleiades—the 7 sisters, associated with both wounds and their healing. Though precession guarantees that the passing presence of these stars is not the root of the association of the Litai and Ate with this decan, it is a curiously appropriate

synchronicity.

Those who walk this decan will face disasters on a variety of scales. Yet these seeming catastrophes offer a two fold boon. The first is to learn to bear the brunt of terrible mistakes and turns of fortune. The native confronts a variety of devils which most live in fear of. The second boon is to learn the way of remedy suggested by the Litae. For we are never powerless when our words reach the ears of those willing and able to help us.

Thus, the power to call upon greater power in order to atone for folly or repair damage done is great here. It is a place of humility. The proper image may be painted to petition the call for help amidst catastrophe, whether it be self-caused or not. In cases of hubris, the formula must involve confession—the ritual sacrifice of the folly which was at cause.

While repair and repentance certainly feature prominently, equally important is the power of preparation. Acts, both magical and mundane, to ward off the visits of evil are potent in this face. Furthermore, the acquisition of allies who can reverse a dire turn of fortune is equally fortuitous, whether those helpers be kind spirits, or the contracted devils of an insurance agency. Ultimately, this face teaches us how to preserve our works, both from our own folly and the titans' rages.

### *Saturn in Taurus III*

IN both primary methods of determining planetary rulership, Saturn is the ruler of this face. Those born with Kronos here are confronted with the potential for disaster inherent to material life. Yet this insight into misfortune is a form of foresight, and those natives which heed the wisdom of this vision learn both how to protect themselves and avert disasters. Saturn in this face also teaches humility before the elements. Humility is indeed key, as half of the difficulties which this face augurs are brought on by acts of hubris. Though the temptation of pride and the vicissitudes of fortune's inconstancy are, to some degree, destined for these natives, so too is the knowledge that there is little that cannot be repaired or atoned for.

Considered the ruler of this decan in various systems, Saturn is mighty here, empowering a variety of magical images. Properly impressed, this image might bring ruin to one or salvation to another. It's finest use may be as apotropaic ward against dire circumstance without, and hubris within.

Contemplation of this face's images yields an understanding of the role that material ordeal plays in shaping and teaching the human soul.

### *Jupiter in Taurus III*

JUPITER in this decan highlights the positive side of this face, exemplified by the Litae. There is great luck in recovering from and avoiding disaster here, as well as an ability to learn from one's lapses in character and judgment. The benefic power of Jupiter may be less evident than in other places, though, for much of the planet's potency is focused toward the prevention and remediation of disaster.

The image of Jupiter looking across fields may be impressed upon the substance here in order to create an amulet which protects against the ruin of one's holdings, and the safeguarding of one's character against the hubristic temptations of Ate.

### *Mars in Taurus III*

MARS is difficult in this decan, as in all of Taurus, where the red planet experiences its traditional detriment. The natives are often prone to hubris, as well the folly which follows on its heels. There is sometimes an identification with the power of disaster, and the mind may turn to great evil when challenged. In its positive manifestation, it offers courage in the face of trying circumstances.

As a magical image, it is difficult to imagine a non-malefic use of this configuration. It contains within it the formulae for a variety of brutal curses, the details of which are best left to Necessity.

### *Sun in Taurus III*

IN this face the light of the Sun illuminates a struggle between hubris and humility, disaster and recovery. Those born with their Sun here have their character tested and shaped not only by events but by their response to them. Due to the nature of this decan, some of the natives are suspicious,

even paranoid, assuming the worst is right around the corner. Yet they are also privy to the secrets of both personal redemption and collective recovery. Their success and character, in large part, depend on their ability to remain humble before the world's great forces, yet remember that although they are not in control, they are far from powerless.

The Sun's time in Taurus is a fine a time for a variety of apotropaic magick. The fearful star Caput Algol, the Head of Medusa to the ancient Greeks, is found in this decan. Her face is one of the most popular evil-averting images of the time, and recommended by Agrippa in his *Three Books of Occult philosophy*, 1500 years later, for the same purpose. The light of the Sun illuminates potential disasters—seeing them, prepare accordingly.

### *Venus in Taurus III*

WHILE strong in all of Taurus, Venus faces some difficulty in the Bull's third face. While usually potent enough to provide luxuries and valuables, there is an insecurity to these riches, for the natives know that there is little in this world that cannot be taken away. One born here need not live in fear, nor assume that all will come to naught, but they must learn to live with the awareness that what they possess can be taken from them by circumstance. From the knowledge of luxury's vulnerable and transitory nature springs a font of gratitude, and humility before life's great forces. Avoiding hubris minimizes the chance that disaster will come at one's own hands, while prudence and foresight provide the best safeguards against those forces beyond one's control.

While Venus is suitable for strictly planetary work in this decan, her powers of attraction are somewhat ill-suited to this face, for what is attracted here is likely to be taken away. It is instead the power of grace in trying situations that Venus grants best here. Venus here is like unto the Litae, following in Ate's destructive footsteps, bringing balm and succor alike. An image graven into a charm would be a boon to those whose careers take them into maelstroms regularly.



### *Mercury in Taurus III*

THOSE born with Mercury in this decan have a good capacity to see the strings of consequence which follow action. Furthermore, they are attuned to fortune's interference in otherwise carefully laid plans. This insight is not a jolly one, and thoughts of what could go wrong afflict many of these natives. Yet if they can learn to separate fear from foresight, they become adept at averting and hedging against likely difficulties.

Mercury's time in the third face of Taurus offers insight into karma and causality, but is of little value as a talisman. Divinatory operations are not unhelpful here, for this face can show those disasters which are ripe.

### *Moon in Taurus III*

THE Moon is strong in Taurus, yet the third face offers challenges the first two do not. Though often possessed of ample internal and/or external resources, those born with the Moon here may see their fortunes subject to forces beyond their control. They will thus either come to regard themselves as victims, or develop the wisdom to see the patterns behind life's fluctuations. Their understanding of tragedy forces them to struggle with fear, but with time these natives develop not only a psychic sturdiness, but abundant foresight and an ability to lay plans which account for misfortune's occasional visits.

When the waxing Moon is in this face, it is an appropriate time to raise wards and conduct other protective operations. When the Moon wanes through this face, a disintegrative potency rays down. In addition to its use as malefica, the waning Moon in this decan offers the power to confront and banish fears.



## GEMINI I: THE APPLE OF EDEN

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FROM the worked land grows a tree, and from it hangs a ripe fruit. A woman, perhaps Eve, plucks the apple and bites. Tasting it, her awareness explodes into a mass of binary code. The ones and zeroes consolidate into the Twins, the mortal and immortal selves.

In Gemini the soul explores its capacity for variety. In the first face the self becomes aware of the duality within all things, especially itself. The proportions of yin and yang emerge, and from this initial vision of the dual, the language of binaries erupts, unlocking the capacity to code all things.

The traditional images for this decan agree as to the gifts of cleverness which this face bestows. The *Picatrix* states that "this is the face of the art of the scribe, of reckoning, of number, of giving and receiving, and of the sciences." Agrippa adds that "it granteth wisdom" and "knowledge of numbers." The full range of Mercury's arts and sciences are described and implied by other figures. The powers attributed to these images include the heights of abstract mathematics, the practical calculation of the merchant, the humble art of the scribe and technique of the seamstress. Indian and earlier Hel-

lenistic images show men clever with both swords and arrows. Possessed of the full power of the mind to divide tasks logically, no art or science is here off limits. Even supernatural powers are suggested by Ibn Ezra, who pictures a "beautiful woman standing in the air."

Yet the tarot card in the Rider Waite deck inspired by this decan, the Eight of Swords, offers a contrasting vision. A woman stands bound and blindfolded in swampy ground. Called "Interference," by Crowley in *The Book of Thoth*, it is a poor omen, betokening a situation where one is paralyzed by an overabundance of options.

Those who walk this face may be similarly paralyzed by the sheer abundance of knowledge possible. No being could take in and process the amount of information the world provides. The glorious explosion of intelligence de-centers the mind by beckoning it down too many pathways simultaneously. Yet other insights occur in this decan which have the capacity to render one motionless.

The mind powerful in the art of analysis bisects the soul, initiating the realization of its dual nature. Alive with spirits of both light and darkness, day and night, the revelation of dual-being shatters the unity of experience. A devil and angel exist within one body, one soul.

The personality is thus split to accommodate differing spirits—where there was one, a multitude throngs. In this face the soul discovers the legion hiding within itself. While it is easy to imagine these insights as containing a moral horror, those who travel this face approach them with curiosity. The self, discovering that it holds within it not one possibility, but a near infinity, is drawn to explore its full range. While the figures of this face are externally occupied by their arts, internally they obsess in the continual discovery of what they might be. Devil horns and angel wings hold similar appeal, and ethical polarities are explored and tested as thoroughly as any other field of investigation.

The division of the world and the naming of its parts in this decan generates all arts, crafts and sciences, and gives rise to a bewildering profusion of selves. It is therefore a face of tremendous curiosity and intelligence. Within it lies the power to discover the multiplicity within all unities, the complexity in apparent simplicities. It provides clever methods and opens numerous pathways, yet this very profusion de-centers and sometimes paralyzes its inhabitants.

### *Saturn in Gemini I*

IN the first face of Gemini, Saturn makes the exploration of duality an obligation. Natives may feel bound to learn something about everything, but incapable of focusing on a single art or science to the point of mastery. It is important that they either accept the pleasures that come with being a dilettante, or bind themselves to a subject to the point of excellence. Furthermore, there may be a split in the personality of those with Saturn here, as they may have a difficult time reconciling the multiplicity of self inherent to this face. As they mature they understand the value of being able to arrange one's appearance, but when they are young they may feel trapped in what others want them to be.

Saturn's time in Gemini does not lend itself to any particularly spectacular magics. It could, however, be used to bind someone to a state of dual awareness, forcing them to acknowledge the polarities within themselves and in other people.

### *Jupiter in Gemini I*

CONSIDERED the ruler of the face in one of the two traditional systems, Jupiter's presence here energizes the essential formula of this decan. Those born with Jupiter here are often swift learners, both technically and technologically inclined. Although the big planet lends swiftness to the mind, the learning process may be troubled by impatience. The natives often discover that their intelligence can be applied to a wide array of fields. It is not uncommon that their interests and options are so wide that they often experience great difficulty picking one direction and staying with it. Although the joy of exploration is their birthright, they must learn to limit their meanderings eventually.

When Jupiter is in Gemini, a fine talisman can be constructed which will aid in the rapid uptake of virtually any sphere of technical knowledge. The bearer may, however, find themselves possessed of too many opportunities to do so, for a talisman of Jupiter in this face will offer more options than one can conceivably follow up on. If one is to possess such a thing, they must match its power with that of their own discretion and focus.

### *Mars in Gemini I*

THOSE born with Mars in the first decan of Gemini will have energetic but impatient minds. The focus with this position is on the practical application of knowledge—the power of words and ideas to accomplish the will. It is also an argumentative position, especially if other natal factors concur. Many of these natives have an excess of mental energy, which may overstress the nervous system and predispose them to personality disorders. A touch of arrogance is not uncommon, for those with Mars here can be tempted to believe that they have an innate mental superiority to others. These natives benefit from cultivating the virtue of patience.

In this face of Gemini Mars provides a volatile, unsustainable energy which is of little use for benefic purposes. A talisman is likely to attract gossip, stress the nervous system and interfere with lung function.

### *Sun in Gemini I*

THOSE born with the Sun in the first face of Gemini are curious, both about themselves and their world. These quick learners are eager to discover the many personae hiding within them, as well the many arts and sciences waiting to be practised. Many become jacks of all trades and masters of none. The arts, particularly the performing arts, allow these natives to explore the many possibilities hiding within them. It is important that they find a path where their love of discovery and experimentation is an asset rather than a liability.

The Sun in the first face of Gemini can be invoked to supercharge the nervous system and its various Mercurial functions. Contemplative work while the Sun is here will serve to illuminate the many possibilities inherent in oneself. Sol may be sufficient for a weak talisman of this face, but the result will be of an inferior potency to one made while Jupiter or Mercury is present.

### *Venus in Gemini I*

THOSE born with Venus in the first face of Gemini are possessed of an ever-expanding range of taste. They are delighted by cleverness and tend to find

intelligence particularly attractive. Their words and intellects often have a certain flourish. They are drawn to explore the full range of their desires, which expands continually. It is thus difficult for many of them to remain satisfied, and they grow bored with pursuits and people easily. It is important for these natives to set limits to their own explorations, for desire's permutations are inexhaustible.

In this face the image of Venus is useful for weaving intellectual and artistic glammers. A talisman will grant its bearer the gift of charming sophistry. Such a power polishes the delivery of communications, but does not improve their content. As with all glammers, care is needed not to be seduced by one's own charms.

### *Mercury in Gemini 1*

MERCURY is potent in this face of Gemini, as he is both lord of the sign and, according to the triplicity method, ruler of the decan. Those born with Mercury here have swift, curious minds. Their capacity to find the language necessary to communicate their perceptions is excellent unless Mercury's position is somehow impeded. They are capable of great learning in any technical art, and gain proficiency with languages quickly. Their minds move quickly, but are often addicted to doing so. Activities which require of the mind a slower pace may be challenging. As with other planets in this decan of Gemini, it is important that these natives learn to focus and pursue subjects beyond the level of mere acquaintance.

The image of Mercury in this face can be impressed for a wide variety of purposes, such as to grant one greater speed of thought and tongue or to aid in the rapid absorption of languages, both literary and mathematical.

### *Moon in Gemini 1*

THOSE born with Luna in the first face of Gemini have mentally active but unstable dispositions. They often have a great love for games, and their comforts often include similarly stimulating activities. Nonetheless, these natives often have difficulty dealing with heavy and complex emotions. There is a tendency to ignore troublesome feelings, which can lead to an unhealthy



polarization of the personality. Those born with the Moon here benefit greatly from slowing themselves down and dealing with the aspects of their experience which they would rather ignore. Meditative practices are recommended.

The waxing Moon in this face of Gemini can aid in manifesting technological devices or sources of information. Its power can also be internalized to stimulate the nervous system and intellect. When the Moon wanes here, its power is of value in banishing distractions. Although of some use, the Moon presence in this decan is not sufficient for a permanent talisman.



## GEMINI II: THE HERMAPHRODITE

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THE joys and horrors of duality are unfurled in the first face of Gemini, but in the second we must learn to reconcile angels and devils within a single soul. Thus, in the second face of Gemini emerge images of continuing duality. The two torture and please one other, making love and war continuously.

This is a decan of art and war. The capacity to live amidst the constant pull and play of dualities is here, as is the capacity to acknowledge both happiness and sadness. A devil and an angel share one's shoulders while blessings and banes fly from hands right and left.

A fragmentary of Hellenistic text, *The 36 Airs of the Zodiac*, allocates this decan to Cybele, the Phrygian earth goddess often identified with the Greek titaness Rhea. At first glance a chthonic mother goddess has little to do with the inner dualities which this face of Gemini is chiefly concerned with. However, a review of Cybele's origin story reveals quite the opposite. Though honored as a mother goddess, Cybele is said to have been born a hermaphrodite, possessed of both male and female generative organs. The other gods, threatened by the potency of her dual gendered being, struck the phallus off,

rendering her female. The severed bit fell to earth, and where it landed an almond tree grew. A passing river nymph ate one of the almonds, and in her grew a child—Attis. Attis grew into a beautiful man, and came to be Cybele's lover. For he was none other than her own maleness, embodied as other.

This story of separation and longing of the sexes also occurs in Plato's *Symposium*, wherein a gathering of artists and philosophers discuss love. When it is the playwright Aristophanes' turn to speak, he relates a curious myth. He says that in the beginning, humans had not two sexes, but three. Immense, strong and rounded creatures, they possessed four arms, four legs, two heads and two sets of genitalia apiece. Some had two male parts, others two female, and still others had one of each. The gods, jealous of them, decided to split them, leaving them with but one generative organ and a single head each. It is in this partial, bisected form that humans now live and breathe. When a human discovers another who was once their other half, they experience love.

These themes are close to the heart of this decan, for here lie both the joy of reunification and the tragedy of separation. The tarot card syncretized with this decan in the Rider Waite deck is the Nine of Swords, called Despair and Cruelty in *Book T* and simply Cruelty by Crowley in *The Book of Thoth*. In the Rider Waite rendition of this card is pictured a man awake in his bed, holding his face in his hands while behind him hang nine sharp swords. Anxiety and confusion radiate.

The figure is torn between contradictions, unable to see things clearly, nor judge right from wrong. It is not the joy of reunion pictured, but the dark, muddled confusion which results from the inability to reconcile dualities within oneself, within the world. The Nine of Swords thus depicts the moments of despair which occur within this face, the irreconcilable places. While such states are not the rule for this face, a series of images which does not include or suggest them is incomplete.

This decan's power, like that of the first decan of Gemini, gives power in a wide variety of realms. The arts of union and separation, love and war, are both within its grasp. It may be no coincidence that one system of planetary rulership gives this decan to Mars, while the other assigns Venus to it. Truly both qualities can be seen, for an angel and demon, a man and a woman both dwell within this face. The images for this decan this vary wildly between masculine and feminine, artistic and war-like. Ibn Ezra pictures a dark man, a weapon in his hand and possessed of a bow and arrows, enjoying ridicule

and mockery. Yet he walks within pleasant garden, picking flowers and playing music.

Within this decan are two—and these two in turn relate to each other in a pair of ways—love and war, solve et coagula. The mind which accepts these oscillations comes to understand the whole of interaction—they are unbothered by either, knowing the other waits in turn. Their minds thus attain, as Agrippa writes in description of this decan, “infamous and dishonest agility, as that of jesters and jugglers.”

### *Saturn in Gemini II*

SATURN in this decan reifies the contradictions between different parts of the self and of the life. Many of those born with the old reaper here are pushed to be different people in different areas of their life. Such enforced separation is not always pleasant, but for one who would play multiple and sometimes contradictory roles, it is necessary. While necessity may demand external divisions, it is important that these natives do not internalize them. Those with Saturn here in their natal pattern must work to maintain interior wholeness, regardless of the roles they are pulled to play in the external world.

Saturn in the second face of Gemini is useful for supporting a division of the way the world views a person. It can be utilized to reinforce the division created by a pseudonym or maintain the boundary between personal and professional lives.

### *Jupiter in Gemini II*

THOSE born with Jupiter in the second face of Gemini have a talent for reconciling dualities, both within themselves and in the world at large. The ability to peacefully contain contradictions is great, but these natives often overestimate their ability to juggle said contrarities. There is also often talent in both aesthetic and martial realms. However, there is also tendency to spread their energy too thin, to take on more than they can bring to fruition.

Jupiter's time in the middle decan of Gemini offers the blessing of being able to juggle life's contradictions more handily. It is, however, better suited to contemplative work than talismanic.

### *Mars in Gemini II*

MARS puts the Mercurial awareness of this decan to strategic advantage. Those born with Mars in the second face of Gemini are often possessed of a cutting cleverness, and able to apply their intelligence to a wide variety of arts and sciences. Though it may not dominate their personalities, they have a capacity for cruelty, as well as a penchant for mockery, which proceeds from an understanding of other people's internal contradictions and a knowledge of how to exploit them. The natives, though clever in identifying the weak points in both systems and other people, may be guilty of the same contradictions they attack in others.

Mars in this decan is excellent for curses whose object is to destroy a person's reputation. A talisman impressed with Mars in this face would quicken the tongue and the mind, especially for strategic purposes. However, when worn it is likely to reduce empathy and may stress the nervous system.

### *Sun in Gemini II*

ONE born with the Sun here lives amidst internal and external contradictions. It is their purpose and talent to reconcile them. Stretched between polarities, many of the natives develop the "dishonest agility" which Agrippa speaks of in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*. They are clever and adaptable, disguising a wider range of actions than one might suspect. Many have the ability to see both sides of a situation, and some play both sides, as well. Regardless of how they might marshal them, these natives often have an abundance of talents, and are clever in both love and war.

The Sun here shines down upon contradictions, and work with Sol in this face can help illuminate and reconcile them. The Sun here is best suited to works of contemplation.

### *Venus in Gemini II*

IN the second decan of Gemini Venus emphasizes the ability to create harmony between opposites. Those born with Venus here form friendships with widely divergent groups of people. Venus rejoices in bridging such polarities,

and her children find pleasure in the same. Fascinated with the contradictions they themselves contain, the natives often have an ability to communicate their inner drama in a charming manner which offsets the inherent self-involvement. They enjoy partnering with people who are unlike themselves, and many enjoy conflict with others to the same degree that they take pleasure in harmony.

Considered the ruler of this decan in the triplicity system, Venus has surprising potency here. A talisman made will help soothe internal conflicts, smooth one's way through the social world, and offer insight into the art of aesthetic communication.

### *Mercury in Gemini II*

THOSE born with Mercury in this face of Gemini are clever, some extremely so. There is an ability in many of the natives to navigate dualities with great skill. Ability abounds in a wide variety of technical fields, and their breadth of knowledge is often great. These natives have an excellent analytic ability, and do well at finding the internal contradictions within both people and systems.

Mercury is powerful in this face and suitable for any traditionally Mercurial work. A talisman of Mercury in this face provides a stimulating mental current, and a heightened analytic capacity.

### *Moon in Gemini II*

THIS is a difficult natal position for the Moon, as its natives must learn to deal with contradictory needs. They are often clever and have an abundance of mental energy, but their instincts and talents often pull them in opposing directions. Their personalities often have great range, but they will seem inconsistent to observers, confident one day and an abyss of self-loathing on another. Work to stabilize their energy levels and self concept is of great benefit.

An unsteady current, the Moon in this face of Gemini is not particularly useful for lunar work and generally unsuitable for the creation of talismans.



## GEMINI III: AN EXECUTIONER'S SWORD

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THE third decan of Gemini holds within it the final bloom of internal and external polarization. The dualities which blossomed in the first decan of Gemini and continued in the second push toward extremes here. The depth of polarization necessitates a choice between the Twins, a resolution to interminable bifurcation. Abel must die, and Castor need be struck down.

With this decan we approach the Summer solstice in the Northern hemisphere. Though wreathed with a thousand myths, the stories that gather around this seasonal pivot focus on the yearly sacrifice of the Sun, for after the summer solstice the Sun's power declines, shrinking with every day until Winter begins. Depicted as the Holly King and the Oak King in Celtic traditions and Baal and Cemosh in the Canaanite mythos, the story is the same. At the Summer solstice, the Lord of Light is killed and his dark brother takes up his reign.

It is important to understand the precise nature of the death which occurs here properly, for it is not the self-sacrifice of Jesus, nor the cognate immolation and rebirth of the Phoenix. The third decan of Gemini sees Castor fall,

Cain slay Abel and Set slay Horus. It is the climax of a story of polarity. The death which occurs here reduces a warring pair back to a stable unity.

It is thus fitting that in the descending order method of allotting the planets to the decans that it is the Sun, the lord of light, who is said to preside over this decan, while in the triplicity method, it is Saturn, the master of darkness who has lordship. The powers of light and dark are both present, and in contention.

This decan brings the myth of the Twins to an end by terminating one of them. In Greek myth the divine Twins are the Dioskouroi, Castor and Polydeukes. After many adventures, Castor is slain, leaving the semi-divine Polydeukes to mourn his mortal brother's death. After his beloved sibling's death, Polydeukes offers to share his immortality with his brother and the gods accept. Thereafter, Polydeukes and Castor alternate days in Hades and Olympus. It is only after the death of one brother that the two are truly equal. The polarity has been mitigated and a dynamic unity achieved.

It is thus fitting that in the Rider Waite Tarot card syncretized with this decan, the Ten of Swords, we see a man lying ruined on the ground, his body pierced by swords. Yet with his hand he gives a sign that all is well, all is as it should be—for this sacrifice is as sacred and as inevitable as his later resurrection.

A fragmentary Greek text, *The 36 Aires of the Zodiac*, allocates the harsh daimona Praxidike to this decan. A companion of Dike, Justice, Praxidike, the "exacter of justice" has the responsibility of carrying out the sentence that justice decrees. She is thus the sometimes-harsh practice of justice, not merely its theoretician. Though none can contest her righteousness, she is ever a terror to those whose transgressions she punishes. Her fury is such that she is said to be kin to the Furies themselves. In ancient Boeotia, Praxidike was worshipped as a trinity. Each member was represented by a head, and accepted only the severed heads of animals in sacrifice. The fate of transgressor is thus made clear here, for the sword of justice is not merely a symbol, but the tool by which the ultimate penalty is enforced.

Yet the sword of judgment is not merely an instrument of terror. To hold or face such a blade is to understand the consequences of one's choices. Those entrusted with this blade grow wise and judicious, else fall to the very tool they wield.

It is the extremity of the polarities which are found in this decan which call to Praxidike. For by the third decan of Gemini, dualities have permuted

far beyond the shades of grey previously explored. The ultimate extremities are present here, taken to the point that they cannot truly coexist. Day and night must split time—they cannot take place simultaneously. Good and evil must do the same. In the end, the conflicting wills of the body and spirit cannot be wholly equilibrated. While the other decans of Gemini involve discovery, exploration and simultaneity, in the third wait choices—judgments that must be made. To achieve actuality, a multitude of possibilities must be sacrificed. Though such burnt offerings are a necessary inevitability, it does not spare those who walk this face difficult decisions.

There is thus a finality to the symbols and spirits of this decan. This haunting may be due to its position as the very last decan in the Egyptian conception of time. While the zodiac has been regarded as beginning in Aries for well over a millennia, Egyptian and Hellenistic arrangements, such as the Thema Mundi, show the world, and year, born with the Sun's yearly entry into Cancer. Such an arrangement makes this decan, the last of Gemini, the final of the sequence of the 36, the last end before a new beginning.

This decan teaches of life-or-death decisions, asking those who walk this face to bear their weight. Martial power and excellence in judgment result in those who can. Yet this face also teaches levity, the dual revelation of life as *comedia/tragedia*. For the wise laugh even as the executioner's blade descends.

### *Saturn in Gemini III*

THOSE born with Saturn in the third decan of Gemini are bound to face difficult decisions. Often caught between contending sides, they may be forced to choose one or the other. Pushed to abandon duality, there is anxiety here, for the natives may be unable to choose one twin over the other. There is thus mental anguish for these natives, especially in their youth. Nonetheless, with time they are able to understand the full complexity of situations and still take a definite position. As they mature, these natives become possessed of sober judgment in the face of difficult questions.

Saturn, sometimes considered the ruler of this face, can be invoked to aid in difficult decisions and to bind one to a decided upon course of action. A talisman impressed with the image of Kronos in this face will aid its bearer in making heavy judgments and acting in accordance with them.

### *Jupiter in Gemini III*

IN the third and final face of Gemini, Jupiter multiplies alternatives to an unsustainable point. The natives are stirred with a desire to expand in all directions, to know all things. This pattern of growth must inevitably lead to massive overextension. The overwhelming ambition of Jupiter here will either lead to failure or conscious sacrifice of many possibilities so that one or two might take root and flourish.

Jupiter's power to expand is contrary to the reduction of possibilities necessary in this face. Talismans crafted under its auspices will bring neither good fortune nor peace of spirit.

### *Mars in Gemini III*

THOSE born with Mars in this face hum with nervous energy. Too many possible routes of action compete and complicate each other. There is also a cunning, ruthless side to these natives, a capacity for hard decisions that few possess. Yet those born with Mars here are especially tempted by wrath, and their judgments may be flawed by unbalanced passions. It is important for these natives to reach an equilibrium of mind before passing severe judgments.

Mars is like a nail bomb here, ruinous but rarely productive. Malefic works may be enacted but they are unlikely to function surgically.

### *Sun in Gemini III*

THE Sun in the third face of Gemini places the native squarely in the drama of this decan. Numerous options abound—those born here come to this life knowing many possibilities. They often have a plethora of interests and talents. Yet their task is to slowly whittle down those options, to decide which of the many possibilities will live, and which will die. The natives of this face are thus self aware, but conflicted. Enduring these internal contradictions generates a principled and philosophical approach to life, while living in bad faith generates ruin. Given time they decide who they will be, and how they will conduct their lives.

The Sun approaches the solstice in this decan. It is potent but not in a manner generally amenable to practical charms and talismans. Contemplation of this annual sacrifice is of great import, but its power is best left unchained to a material object.

### *Venus in Gemini III*

IN the third face of Gemini, Venus exposes widely divergent desires. Those born while Venus is here know the extremes of the heart, and are stranger to no love or hate. These natives lust for much, yet must learn to make decisions regarding which possibilities they will make real. Those who do not limit or restrain their desires inevitably face interpersonal disaster.

Venus here is not useful for talismanic or traditionally Venusian work here. It may, however, be beneficial to conduct divination regarding the love life while Venus is in this face.

### *Mercury in Gemini III*

THE lord of all Gemini, Mercury is strong and capable in this face. While as quick and bright as in any other face of Gemini, when found here Hermes possesses a sobriety not found in the other decans. The natives' cleverness is tempered by a serious and philosophical streak. Many have a nuanced understanding of ethical issues. Their playfulness, but not their capacity for knowledge, is diminished.

When in this face of Gemini, Mercury's image might be impressed upon the proper substance to create a talisman for subtle and thoughtful judgments. The bearer's capacity to make decisions will be thusly improved, though they will likely find matters requiring such sagacity brought before them.

### *Moon in Gemini III*

THE third face of Gemini is difficult terrain for Luna. The profusion of polarities and difficult choices are hard on the sensitive parts of the soul whose

fortune the Moon augurs. Many of those born with the Moon in this decan of Gemini are torn between warring parents, peers or cultures. Natural arbiters, many are pushed to make important decisions early in life. Thus they may be a bit cold to the touch, unwilling to engage emotionally. Their personalities tend to be principled, but distant. Cultivating compassion and practicing intimacy balances their characters and soothes their anxious dispositions. If afflicted, a variety of nervous disorders may be present.

The Moon's position in the third face of Gemini is not appropriate for traditional lunar work, nor does it make for fortunate talismans.





## CANCER I: A MOTHER AND CHILD

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IN the tropical zodiac, the Sun's time in Cancer begins with the Summer Solstice. Although now considered the fourth sign of the zodiac, in the oldest astrological arrangements, those of the Hellenistic period, the sign of Cancer was the first of the wheel. The scheme of this arrangement, the *Thema Mundi*, was considered the horoscope of the universe itself, and began with Cancer. This harkens back to earlier Egyptian traditions, wherein the year, and the world itself, were thought to begin under the sign of Cancer.

This is in many ways fitting, for Cancer is the sign of the mother, and it is within the mother that we all begin. Thus, in the first face of Cancer emerge visions of a child growing in the womb and time lapse footage of a seed sprouting within the earth. The spirit is embedded in the womb of the goddess and from that seed grows a body.

There is the intimacy between mother and child here. It appears that the mother nurtures the child, just as the earth nurtures the seed, but there is a hidden reciprocity to the relationship. The child is an extension of the mother, her accomplishment, just as the seed is the fulfillment of the earth's desire

to bloom, the mineral lust for greater animation and dynamism.

Yet if we look more closely at the figure of the child in the womb, we see that within it incubates yet another child, and in that child another, ad infinitum. For while we are nurtured and draw sustenance, it is ultimately so that we may bring into the world our children, the creations we dream of. This is not a hierarchy, but a chain of interdependence and growth.

Yet we are not always given what we need by a kindly mother. Luna, whose influence in all of Cancer's decans is indisputable, is not merely the kindly mother—her power is two-fold. She gives as she waxes but takes when she wanes.

The Moon has thus been routinely depicted as both the nurturing mother, but also as Artemis, the childless, skin-clad huntress, protectress and devourer of beasts.

To us some is given, and the rest we must take. Biological and emotional hungers are thus seen in this face, and in this more savage light, the chain of mothers and children becomes an endless cycle of beasts devouring and being devoured in turn.

A fragmentary Hellenistic text, *The 36 Airts of the Zodiac*, sees the goddess Nike, winged victory, in this decan, a strange departure from the images so far discussed. Nike's most prominent role in myth was as Zeus' charioteer, and it is in this role that she is most often depicted.

Yet what does a chariot have to do with the tender and fierce biological processes previously described? The vision of a charioteer seems out of place in this decan unless considered in the light of Tarot key VII, "The Chariot," the trump card correlated with the entirety of the Crab's sign. When we gaze upon a mother tenderly nursing her child or the wolf devouring the lamb, the matter is one of gaining the nutrients necessary to make the body—the spirit's vehicle—strong. Chariots have, cross-culturally, long been a preferred symbolic reference to the body as the vehicle of the soul. Thus Nike, as the charioteer, is the one who knows the requirements of the vehicle. Though vulnerability and hunger are the needs which drive the events seen in this face, their product is strength—a vehicle fully sufficient for life's journey.

Though many of the core themes of this decan focus on the mother and child, the same dynamics permeate the quest for romantic love. It is the perfect support, half-remembered from the womb, that gives rise to the human dream of similarly nurturing bonds between committed partners. The Rider Waite card given to this face is the Two of Cups, simply titled Love in both

*Book T* and Crowley's *Book of Thoth*. The card depicts, two lovers joining their chalices and a red lion rising from the united cups. *The Three Books of Occult Philosophy* also focuses on the capacity for romance in this decan, though it is a comely young virgin which is pictured.

Though thoroughly romanticized, the actual dynamic entailed herein is a mixture of hunger and sweetness. Love and need blend together here. Yet there is an alchemy, for the energy circulates between the two participants. It is as if the two reside in each other's wombs, simultaneously devouring and being devoured, yet neither is depleted. It is this miracle of entwined vessels that many long for when they dream of the love that will save and strengthen them. The possibility of this manner of union can be seen in this decan, yet success in this matter requires more than longing.

This face's magical virtue is to establish mutually nurturing relationships. It may be created as a magnet to bring such things into a person's life, or painted so as to bring two parties closer. An image might also be impressed to pull all that one needs into one's life, a talisman protecting one against hunger on various levels. The same power might be applied to an orchard or other cultivated patch, to ensure their abundant strength.

### *Saturn in Cancer I*

THOSE born with Saturn in the first face of Cancer are subject to a difficult fortune, for their lives often take shape without the care they need. Though a variety of circumstances may bring this lack about, the mother is often to blame. These natives know hunger, and those that have listened to the language of its gnawing understand it better than most. They understand the hungers that drive many people and many are thus wary of falling prey to them. Twinned fears of abandonment and intimacy haunt many of these natives, though many learn, with time, to move beyond them and create the nurturing situations which they were deprived of.

Saturn dries up the life giving rivers and streams here. Isolation and hunger are the fruits of grim Kronos in this face. This face may be used to invoke the wrathful side of black and indigo mother goddesses, and an impression of Saturn here can be utilized to bring about an ordeal of hunger and need.

## *Jupiter in Cancer 1*

IN this face Jupiter is extremely fortuitous. As in myth, one nourished by Zeus grows strong. Those born with Jupiter in this decan are, unless the planet is badly afflicted, fortunate in love, and often offered more support than they need. If this position presents a difficulty, it is that the natives may find themselves taking for granted these ideal exchanges, and may be ignorant of the cold want that drives so many. The wise among them look deeply into others' suffering and offer what extra they have to those less blessed.

Many of those born with Jupiter here also understand how to nurture more subtle aspects of their being, and have good luck in finding what their soul needs to grow strong. The fruit here is wisdom, and health on veiled planes of being.

The star of Jove planted in the rich soil of this decan yields an abundance of benefic applications. Its power, properly inscribed, can draw all that one needs for health on all levels. The same blessing might be lent to a location, the image impressed into metal and buried in its soil or enshrined in a suitable location.

## *Mars in Cancer 1*

HERE lies the big bad wolf. Those born with Mars in this decan come to know the ruthlessness to which unmet needs can push people. The star of Ares here augurs ill experiences, an inversion of the formulae wherein the mother nurtures the child. Instead, the child is food for the mother, the patient the prey of the nurse. Though there is misfortune here, there is also a deep insight into the animal self, the prison of fear and hunger which the human has never truly escaped from. Those who work with this position learn to protect themselves, and others, from the cruel situations Mars in this face threatens.

As a talisman or spell, this formulae is most properly a curse, for it brings about hostility in the most tender of relationships. Violence between mother and child, seed and land. It inflicts desperation and parasitism.

### *Sun in Cancer 1*

THE natives born with the Sun in this face of Cancer are often sensitive, caring and thoughtful people. They are concerned with establishing harmonious, mutually supportive relationships, although their success in this matter may not come easily. Sometimes these natives develop a deeply nurturing relationship with an art form rather than a person. Childhood patterns, both positive and negative, tend to be enduring. Their ability to give deeply of themselves is a rare talent, but they must be careful in selecting to what and to whom they offer their energies.

The Sun's time in the first decan of Cancer is not a useful position for talismanic work, although a solar rite performed here will provide a heightened awareness of relationship dynamics and a greater understanding of what one needs. It is a proper time to honor the divine mother, in whatever form best conveys her power.

### *Venus in Cancer 1*

CONSIDERED the ruler of this decan in one system, Venus is sweet and strong in the first face of Cancer. If unafflicted, the natives experience great affection in their early life, and carry the imprint of these experiences with them, being capable of loving others and making themselves easy to care for. Though often gifted in facilitating connection, these natives often have difficulty going without a partner or close friends. Many of them benefit by learning to be more emotionally self-sufficient.

Venus is strong here, and when properly impressed, makes for a powerful love talisman. Yet an image like this does not merely bring the desired into one's sphere—it facilitates a swift process of enmeshment. Those drawn by this face are not easily extricated. A more thoughtful use of this image would be to deepen and sweeten an existing romantic connection.

### *Mercury in Cancer 1*

MERCURY grants its natives the ability to speak to and address the emotional needs of others. If Mercury is unafflicted and the Moon strong, these na-

tives have great abilities with children, and handle the children hiding within adults with equal ease. Dry logical modes of discourse may be somewhat alien to them, and thus they may stumble or walk crookedly there. Nonetheless, for some the mother that nurtures them is an art or science. These individuals will evidence a strong, well cultivated intellect.

This face may be painted in order to facilitate a deep enmeshment with an art or science. The establishment of this type of emotional engagement provides deep and thorough learning—a type of mental osmosis. Here one might also unlock the secrets of the use of the voice to convey love through poetry or song, or aid others in speaking needs they are otherwise unable to verbalize.

### *Moon in Cancer*

THE Moon in this decan is potent, and considered its ruler in the triplicity systems. The natives are moved by powerful needs, yet they understand their hungers and if the Moon is unimpeded, are able to get them met with minimal difficulty. Those with Luna unafflicted will have firm foundations, healthy and well established. In cases where the Moon is damaged, their needs may exceed what is supplied to them, or they may evidence patterns of self-denial.

An image might be graven here of a tree, its roots well planted in the soil and Luna shining over it. A woman in white tends to the tree, guaranteeing its strength. This image draws to its bearer what they might need to grow to their full height, and to bear the fruit that is rightfully theirs to offer.





## CANCER II: A WALLED GARDEN

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In the first decan of Cancer the tender and fearful bonds of intimacy are established, and in the second the fragile duad is incubated. In this face come images of beauty, joy and wealth—for these emerge naturally out of a matter properly nurtured. Yet nurturing is insufficient—what is precious must also be protected.

The second face of Cancer is like a walled garden in which something precious is kept. A greenhouse exists here, to nurture what is beautiful and exotic—but fragile.

Many of the images attributed to this face picture figures of mirth and abundance. An early Indian text, the *Yavanajataka*, offers the vision of a lovely woman, sweet of voice. Ibn Ezra follows suit, painting a similar picture of a beautiful woman of pleasant speech, as does the *Picatrix*. The honeyed tongue described in these images is also echoed by the traditional attribution of Mercury to this face, for Mercury rules speech. In Agrippa's compendious *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, this rare flower is joined by a well-dressed gentlemen. The Rider Waite tarot offers another cognate image, picturing

three women raising cups together in celebration. Called "Abundance" in both *Book T* and *The Book of Thoth*, it continues the same themes.

Within the protected confines of the alembic, intimacy, vulnerability and even frivolity are possible. However, the comfort and joy which occurs in such a place cannot occur without protection. Yet the barriers which surround and support the scenes of mirth are not visible in many of the images attributed to this decan. If the garden is not walled, then surely the wolves will find their way in. The triplicity method of planetary assignment attests to this looming threat by allotting predatory Mars to this decan.

*Liber Hermetis*, a Renaissance adaptation of a much earlier Greek work, offers a strange image. A vulture with the crowned head of a great goddess is described in its pages, though no further explanation is given. As *Liber Hermetis* contains many fragments of older Egyptian lore, it is highly likely that this fragmentary image refers to Nekhbet, an Egyptian goddess with the body of a vulture. Nekhbet, in keeping with the maternal symbolism of Cancer, was regarded as a primordial creatrix, so much so that her priestesses were referred to as "mothers" themselves. Nekhbet's animal totem, the Egyptian white vulture, lacks any differentiating sexual features and there being no perceptible difference between males and females, they were thought to be sexless and therefore capable of asexual reproduction, symbols of the self fertilizing mother-father. Later Nekhbet was adopted as the patroness and protectress of all of Upper Egypt, and her wings marked the pharaoh's crown. A mother-figure, divine or otherwise, must protect the playful figures of this decan. For the hungry are drawn to abundance as the wolf is to the sheep.

A fragmentary Hellenistic text, *The 36 Airts of the Zodiac*, attributes the face to Heracles, the muscled hero of Greek mythology. Yet a club wielding epitome of masculine virtue draped in lion-skin hardly seems appropriate for a decan concerned with maternal protection of the womb's fruit. To find the link, though, one need look no further than Hercules' name. Hercules is derived from "Hera," the mother-queen of the gods, and "kleos" meaning glory. His name thus means "Hera's Glory." For those who know his tale, this is a strange name indeed, for even before his birth Hera plagued and tormented him. Ironically, it was she who, unknowingly suckled Heracles as an infant. The strength of the mother not only nourished him, but provided the architecture of his epic journey, for Heracles' twelve labors came at Hera's behest. Though on the surface Heracles is a symbol of masculine potency, his entire story, from before birth until after death, was orchestrated by Hera, the

mother. While in later images of this decan we see what flourishes under the mother's protection, the story of Heracles represents a more profound and difficult truth. If he had only been subject to Hera's kindness, his story would have been short and pleasant, and no great deeds would be attributed to him. The mother, like the Moon, has two faces, one light and one dark. While we may find pleasure in being coddled, the wise mother orchestrates challenges that her children might become heroes and heroines.

In this decan we see the protective, guiding power of the mother goddess. Rare pleasures bloom in such gardens. Yet trials and great labors are equally nutritive for the developing soul. The great secret of this face is the power of right incubation.

### *Saturn in Cancer II*

THOSE born with Saturn in the second face of Cancer are more likely to encounter the mother as the persecuting Hera than the protective Nekhbet. The natives are often deprived of the nurturing and protection that they need in youth. Instead, many are offered the strange milk of complicated ancestral karma. Yet what some of these natives come to understand is that trial and ordeal are their own ambrosia, and that the mother's wrath teaches as much as her pleasure. The lessons of the dark goddess are theirs, though the simple joys of nurturing and being nurtured may be more obscure.

In the second face of Cancer Saturn exposes the infant prematurely or uses the womb like a vise, crushing those enclosed within it. It is unfortunate, liable to bring trouble to children and pregnant woman. A talisman made with Saturn in this face calls a variety of difficult ordeals.

### *Jupiter in Cancer II*

JUPITER, fortunate in all of Cancer, reaches the height of his exaltation in the middle of this face. Those born with Jupiter in this decan often have an intuitive understanding of how to nourish and protect. Though this talent is of clear use in child-rearing, its use extends to encompass many areas of life. Ideas, talents, businesses and other projects all benefit from proper incubation. These natives have a green thumb, for under their touch life thrives.

Their power is to bring things to maturity, which if properly wielded is of unparalleled value.

Jupiter is strong and fortunate in all of Cancer and particularly auspicious in this decan. The power one can access here provides excellent results when anchored to a specific individual or project which one wishes to see develop superbly. A talisman made for Jupiter in this face will be of great benefit to whomever its bearer is, offering access to some of the finest wisdom that Jupiter can bestow.

### *Mars in Cancer II*

IN his fall here, Mars makes trouble for those born while he is here, bringing conflict to the tenderest battlefields. Familial relationships are often the focus of Mars' ire when he is in this face. These aggressions are rarely open wars, but covert, sometimes poisonous campaigns of passive aggression. The natives thus learn how to deal with strife within the walled garden. Sensitive to people's needs and motivations, with time and effort many of these natives become skillful at dissolving these pernicious conflicts before they occur.

Mars' time in this decan of Cancer makes him unsuitable for martial empowerment. If this power is drawn into a talisman, subtle and pernicious conflicts will plague the bearer.

### *Sun in Cancer II*

THE Sun shines down into the walled garden of this face. The natives cultivate their lives carefully, nurturing their relationships and career toward maturity. This decan produces some rare and strange individuals, hot house flowers which can only thrive in the idiosyncratic environment which they cultivate. Yet there is a vulnerability to such constructs, and thus a fearfulness to these natives when they are forced outside of their comfort zone.

In the second decan of Cancer, the Sun's power can be invoked to bring greater awareness to what a project or person needs to grow strong. A rite of approach and contemplation offers such benefits. Work can also be done to strengthen a particular work, though the benefits are not nearly so great as when Jupiter or Mercury is here.

### *Venus in Cancer II*

VENUS is happy in this face of Cancer, for she finds the entertainments and delights within the walled garden pleasing. These natives learn to choose carefully who they invest their time and energy in. They cultivate friendships and romantic relationships thoughtfully, and tend to prefer quality over quantity. Though their inner circle may be small, with those whom they feel comfort they are very open—even silly. Because their childhood strongly impacts their preferences, they run the risk of perpetuating pathological patterns. Careful about accepting a new person into their life, they may also delay expelling someone from their circle. Their task is to master the cultivation of relationships.

Venus in this face can provide for works of attraction. If material gain is the goal, rare, carefully cultivated luxuries are likely to answer the call. If affection is instead the target, then those who are pulled into the life will desire intimacy. Bonds will form quickly here, and it may difficult to extricate a person so invited.

### *Mercury in Cancer II*

CONSIDERED the ruler of this decan in the descending order method, Mercury is effective in this face of Cancer. When the messenger resides here and is unafflicted, the sweetness of voice referred to in several of the traditional images is present. Many of these natives can speak to the tangle of needs and wants which reside within people. They are able to soothe and clarify with their words. If Mercury is afflicted, they may be unable to communicate in accordance with their insights, or contrarily, they may find themselves activating complexes of negative emotion without meaning to. Their words have an emotional effect, and learning to how to use this ability is important.

The image of Mercury in this decan can be impressed onto a talisman to gain greater mastery over one's voice. Such a creation is also likely to put people at ease when worn, facilitating comfort.

## *Moon in Cancer II*

THOUGH not the ruler of this face, the Moon is strong and fortunate in Cancer. The natives tend to alternate between careful cultivation and sloppy excess. The pleasures of this decan may be too much of a temptation for these natives. Though their natures are often indulgent, they also tend to take great care in nurturing their chosen path and unless the Moon be badly afflicted, are often quite successful. They may be a bit too content within the walled gardens they build though, and many have difficulty operating outside of these carefully crafted zones. Their emotions and instincts are strong, and their ability to bring matters to healthy maturity is excellent, but they are prone to excesses of emotionality.

The Moon in this decan is best used in tandem with another planetary influence to which it is joined. Without a matter to protect and nurture, the Moon's power here is wasted. This particular potency is best accessed when Luna waxes through this face.





## CANCER III: THE OVERFLOWING CUP

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THERE is not enough for everyone and everything to grow to full size. Many of nature's children perish before reaching adulthood. In the human world, these resources are not merely food and space, though that is the beginning of it. This decan juxtaposes the advantages and dangers of luxurious excess with the truth of scarcity. A variety of images highlight different facets of the dynamic contained therein.

The Rider Waite tarot card syncretized with this decan is the Four of Cups, called "Blended Pleasure" in *Book T* and "Luxury" in *The Book of Thoth*. The Rider Waite card depicts a man sitting beneath a tree with three cups. A hand floating in the air offers him a fourth, but his crossed arms indicate that he is resistant. This card shows the adept refusing more than he needs, like a sage at a cocktail party. This is an ascetic take on this face, consistent with the ethics of the late Victorian esotericists responsible for its construction. Yet what does it mean to reach for the fourth cup, whose presence illustrates the difference between luxury and mere sufficiency?

What is luxury? As it is defined by this face, it is having more than you

need—the extra cup. Luxury can be meaningfully juxtaposed to scarcity—not having enough. It is rare that there is more than enough for everyone on a material level. Societies and ecosystems alike entail competition for limited resources. For one to have enough, or more than enough, another must be denied. The less there is to go around, the more intense competition is. It is actually the fear born of scarcity which drives man and beast to attain great, fattened stores. There is thus hidden violence and secret competition entailed within the quest for luxury.

Agrippa, in his *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, shows a man armed with a lance assembling dogs in preparation for the hunt. The hunter's success is the animal's death, and the animal's triumph the hunter's starvation. We are reminded again that this face entails many situations in which one must lose for the other to win.

The hunter pictured in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* has a horse and dogs. In Agrippa's time, the 15th century CE, this was not the kit of a hungry serf, but the intimidating entourage of a landed noble. A member of the nobility does not fear his table bare—he will eat that night, regardless of his success in the hunt. So why does he hunt? He hunts, or sends his men to hunt, in order to ensure that the larder is not merely sufficiently stocked, but loaded so that even lean times will pose no threat. This luxury, this protective excess, guards against the spectre of future deprivation.

The image for this face, given in the *Picatrix* shows, simply, a man be-decked in a gold chain and holding a snake in one of his hands. It is said to be for “acquiring in war, in strife and contrariety.” Though the imagery is different, the principle expressed is identical to that suggested in Agrippa's later image.

In a world of limited material resources, the attainment of luxury for one entails deprivation for others. Yet this world is not our creation, and none of our acts will erase its abundant inequalities. For those who walk this face and seek its fruits there is therefore a karmic dilemma involved. It is therefore of vital importance in this decan to share, to invest the excess that one acquires in good works—to be a conduit for luxury, not its endpoint.

Though many of the figures found here may get lost in the process of obtaining luxury, much lies beyond acquisition. As expressed by Abraham Maslow's pyramid of needs, many human activities are only possible when the basic needs for food and security are met. Those who aspire to spend their days pondering philosophy or decorating the human world with art

have positions which depend upon luxury. These excesses make the specialized labor of aesthetes and intellectuals possible.

Therefore this decan not only points its residents to the struggle between luxury and scarcity, it also poses a question: what does one do with the excess one accumulates? Success in the attainment of wealth tests and reveals the character of its possessors.

While this face has much to teach about the material dynamics of scarcity and excess, not all matters relevant to it can be confined to matters of food, wealth and shelter. Our world also provides gifts not so easily exhausted. The ever present energy of the natural world—the chi which emanates from all living things—is an ocean even a thirsty god could not drain. Likewise, the spirit offers cups ever-refilled. This decan thus offers a vision not only of hoarding the finite, but the endless luxury of the limitless.

A curious fragment from the Hellenistic era, *The 36 Airts of the Zodiac*, attributes to this decan the dark goddess Hekate. A mysterious goddess of the underworld in classical Greek lore, she was before that a Thracian goddess whose realm enclosed land, sea and air—the three divisions of the created world. In later Neoplatonic works, Hekate came again to represent the body of creation itself. A great goddess, Hekate was accorded power over all realms in creation, both the living and the dead. She was most often attended by hounds, which are curiously present in Agrippa's picture for this face more than a millennia later. Her presence is also alluded to in *Liber Hermetis*, whose image for this decan combines the faces of great goddesses with that of Anubis, the jackal (dog) headed psychopomp of ancient Egypt. Lady of the three worlds, Hekate was said to grant material wishes to her petitioners. As Hesiod writes in the *Theogony*:

"For to this day, whenever any one of men on earth offers rich sacrifices and prays for favour according to custom, he calls upon Hekate. Great honour comes full easily to him whose prayers the goddess receives favourably, and she bestows wealth upon him; for the power surely is with her."

Yet Hekate was not merely a goddess of wealth. The secrets of the underworld were hers and she has long been considered the patron of witches. Her relation to the theme of this face is clear, for she is both a nurturer (*kourotrophos*) and destroyer, granting wealth to one while inflicting terrible poverty on another.

This is a face of great power, for it can open the pathway toward the luxury which so many desire. Yet images of wealth conceal the process by which

the cup is overfilled and the question of how to invest the excess. Primordial desires overlap with complex karmic questions.

### *Saturn in Cancer III*

SATURN in this decan of Cancer forces its natives to acknowledge the contending truths of scarcity and luxury. They may be denied what they need growing up while being keenly aware that there are those who have more than enough. The converse situation is equally possible—being raised in luxury yet aware that what they have comes at the cost of others. These situations bring with them either hunger and resentment or the guilt of privilege. With time, Saturn teaches both the value and cost of luxury. With sufficient maturity, those born with the star of Kronos here learn how to attain what they need from the world without guilt or resentment.

Saturn is in his traditional detriment in Cancer, and is thus unfit for the traditional battery of Saturnine operations. Saturn is unhelpful for the attainment of luxury which this face pictures, thus limiting his use here primarily to malefica.

### *Jupiter in Cancer III*

STRONG in Cancer, Jupiter offers the very luxuries this face promises. Those with Jupiter here are often born to fortunate circumstances, raised in a situation where they have more than enough resources to grow in the direction their natures impel them. With time, they gain a good understanding of the relationship between luxury and scarcity, though these natives seek to enrich themselves at little or no cost to others. They strive to make their own good fortune that of others. Drawn toward the best possible manifestation of this face, their idealism may, nonetheless, be accompanied a degree of naivete.

Jupiter's exaltation in Cancer opens the way for works of mutual enrichment. A talisman made here will offer its bearer a glad understanding of the ways one can profit at no one's expense. Such a thing will also incline its bearer toward the appreciation of philosophy, literature and the arts.

### *Mars in Cancer III*

MARS brings out many of the most difficult aspects of this decan. Many of those born here will find themselves victim of other's needs and subject to intemperate hungers. Other natives may find themselves craving luxuries beyond their reach, and willing to take what they need by force or deception. Those born with the red planet in this decan must learn to protect themselves from those who would take unjustly from them, and learn to still the envy that arises within them.

Mars is unsuitable for martial empowerments or other works of victory when present in this face.

### *Sun in Cancer III*

THOSE born with the Sun here often find they have tastes and proclivities which cannot be satisfied without certain luxuries. These natives may need extra free time or money in order to explore their interests sufficiently. Many of them are drawn toward art, philosophy and other high-minded endeavors. Fortunately, unless the Sun's position is badly afflicted, they will find success in acquiring what they need in order to nurture themselves.

The Sun's time in this decan outlines its themes and tensions, but it is of only passing power in bringing them to pass. A talisman made here will bring more awareness than potency, and thus Sol's time in this decan is best suited to works of contemplation.

### *Venus in Cancer III*

IN the third face of Cancer, Venus finds herself besotted with exquisite luxuries. Inclined toward extravagant taste, those with Venus in this decan take pleasure in the rare and wonderful. For some natives these tastes will run toward literal luxuries, such as art objects and jewelry, but for many works of literature, art and philosophy are prized as well. The spiritually inclined will have a great appreciation for carefully cultivated attainments.

Venus has a variety of uses in this decan. Works may be performed to attract luxuries, or people of wealth and taste into one's life. Venus here is also

helpful for those who wish to weave a glamour of culture and sophistication.

### *Mercury in Cancer III*

THOSE born with Mercury in the third face of Cancer are drawn to philosophy and the arts, but also material pleasures and creature comforts. The brighter and more fortunate of these natives will spend time cultivating their interests, and will thereby attain sophistication in their chosen subjects. However, the more materially disposed will devote their thoughts to obtaining wealth. Those born with Mercury in this face have sensitive minds, perceptive but vulnerable to distraction and prone to emotional distortion.

Mercury lacks dignity in the third decan of Cancer, and the performance of works allotted to the messenger's sphere is therefore not recommended.

### *Moon in Cancer III*

CONSIDERED the ruler of this decan in the descending order schema, Luna is powerful in this face. She instills in her natives powerful hungers but also the means to fulfill them. Those born with the Moon in this decan often have a great desire for comfort, security and abundance. They are giving, but generally confine their acts of generosity to a small circle of people—their family or those who are like unto kin.

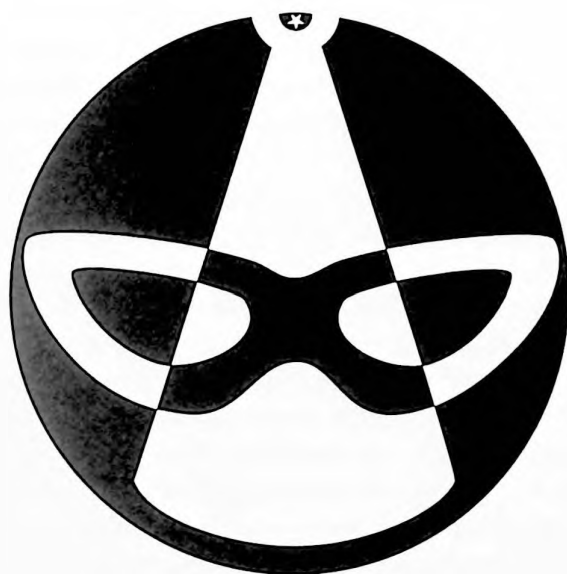
The Moon is strong in the third face of Cancer. A talisman can thus be created here which opens the way to desired luxuries. Work directed toward a specific aim will see it completed, while a talisman created for more general purposes will bless the bearer, attracting to them both necessities and extravagances.





## LEO I: THE SPOTLIGHT

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THE spotlight shines on the otherwise dark and empty stage. The harsh light descends from above, the finger of god as a brilliant, scorching ray. For just a moment, the one within its circle is the only one who exists.

Yet the one who occupies the spotlight is not, cannot, be the only one who exists. For those who wish to be the object of attention, though, this illusion is a great prize—it's golden rays more valuable than the king of metals. The spotlight, being the object of desire for many, creates competition and strife between its numerous acolytes. This is the aspect of the first face of Leo depicted in the Five of Wands, the card allotted to it in the Rider Waite deck. In it five men, wielding their wands as staves, battle for supremacy. It is called "Strife" in *Book T* and *The Book of Thoth*.

Such scenes dance across the stage of the first face of Leo. This face is thus best understood in terms of both the drama which takes place backstage as well as that on-stage. Here performers sabotage each other, each vying for the leading role. In one sense this single beam is the leading role—as a solar ray, it literally conveys upon its occupant "star power."



In addition to the strife between the would-be stars, there is also an internal struggle here. The solar spotlight reveals, but also reifies. Appearance hardens into reality. Its rays bind, restrict, and simplify any being caught within them into a series of images—mere sense impressions. This entrapment in image exposes the rationale behind Saturn's traditional rulership of this decan. The spotlight extracts a price for its blessings, and those not overwhelmed by base vanity approach the beam with both respect and fear.

The power of this decan is to focus a mass of attention on one point or person. The central beam, the spotlight, serves to direct and focus the rays of attention from the audience. Although it appears singular, it is thus a nodal point, where 10,001 gazes converge.

To be able to direct the spotlight is a potent power. While the ability to gain attention is an obvious use, being able to draw attention is as valuable for the scoundrel as for the actor. By directing attention to somewhere other than the place where the real action occurs, one is thus able to go about certain activities unseen. Power over visibility can thus grant one both fame and invisibility—not to mention the spectrum of power that arises from different mixtures of light and darkness.

The character of those seen in this decan is often in question, for in its light the ego can grow with cancerous abandon. Accustomed to a unsustainable diet of attention, the identity can swell to monstrous size. On the other hand, some of the figures which move across this face hide from the light compulsively, avoiding it all costs. Here the ego-self is utterly deprived of light and love and is thus shrunken and afflicted by the hunger that is attendant to starvation. Excess and deficiency are both a result of using the power to direct attention poorly. The ray can heal or scorch.

This decan contains a key position in life's drama. There are spotlights waiting for us at certain crossroads, stages set up and awaiting our performance. There are times where it is one's performance and decisions that are utterly determinant of the state of not only our life but other lives. These rays are cast down not by our decisions, but by Life itself. Here one will inevitably experience a variant of stage fright, or else rush toward the beam with ignorance and bravado. This decan shows these situations and our answer to them.

Many fear the beams, as they should. Yet the practices of those who live their lives there are most instructive. Knowing that it is not the entirety of their being which is on display, those who work under the spotlight craft their

appearances, using make up and costume—the tools of the masquerade.

The magical weapon, armor and tool for this decan is thus the Mask. The mask focuses the wearer's attention on those aspects of their being which are in harmony with the mask's appearance and enhances one's ability to express them. The mask serves a similar function with onlookers—it focuses their attention on certain qualities. The mask is thus the mystical nexus between all of the streams of attention in place. The mask is also armor, for it shields as well.

It is interesting to note that the word for mask in Latin is "Persona." "Persona" is used in modern English to denote a portion of the psyche, and is the root of the more common term "personality." The "persona" does not describe the entire geography of the soul, instead, it describes the social role played by the person. The personality thus contains modes of expression and action which predispose one to playing a particular role, whether that part be villain, savior or victim.

Thus the material of the psyche coalesces and then concretizes into the pattern necessary to function in a given role—the mask. An effective mask creates a nexus point which mediates inside and outside, self and other. Being perceived as such and acting through the mask both feed it. Masks, like the spotlight which they are created to survive, are perilous tools, for as they are fed by attention they grow stronger, consuming more of the wearer's energy. The mask/persona can thus go from being a useful tool to a powerful parasite, feeding off of and devouring their host. The mask, like many magical tools, is in many ways like a living symbiote.

The mask's ritual uses are many, but one particularly key function is to catalyze possession or embodiment of a diety or spirit. The attention of the performer and audience is focused on a single set of qualities, a nexus of energy into which a variety of spirits can manifest. The problems with the mask are multiplied here, for a potent spirit comes to indwell the mask, entangling with the psychic energies of the wearer.

The Mask and the Spotlight allow for mastery over appearance and invisibility, revelation and concealment. The power of this face shines deeply in the realms of theater, politics, psychology and marketing. The talismans created here direct and focus attention for a variety of purposes.

### *Saturn in Leo 1*

SATURN is the traditional ruler of this decan and thus quite strong here. The challenging qualities of the face are emphasized—the demands of the spotlight and one's fear of overexposure to them. People born with Saturn here must learn the art and science of directing attention. This means being able to step into a central position when necessary and being able to abandon the light when it is no longer appropriate. The natives may find themselves trapped in a grid of other people's expectations. It is important for them to craft a mask appropriate to their chosen role, but it is equally important that they distinguish between that mask and their true face.

The magical uses of Saturn in this decan are many. Its essential power is to structure perception by gathering or deflecting attention. Thus works of fame and those of invisibility are both appropriate. Indeed, Saturn here unlocks the great black magic of our time—marketing.

### *Jupiter in Leo 1*

JUPITER encounters certain difficulties in this face. The natives often feel a certain innate glory, yet may find themselves met with a less appreciative reception than they feel they warrant. The natives often have a light worth sharing, but to do so effectively they must learn to let go of naïve ideas about the nature of appearance. In this decan Jupiter also grants some of its natives star power, but without concretization and refinement there will be little success. With the proper support, Jupiter in this position can make for one who is able to perform the role of the teacher or guru quite effectively. Jupiter in this position tends to improve with time, as the natives learn from those situations where they are put on the spot.

Though it can be used to gain wisdom and insight into the mask and the spotlight, Jupiter's energy is ill-suited for practical work in this decan.

### *Mars in Leo 1*

WHEN Mars' red light shines through this face, courage and conflict erupt. The natives must learn to find the courage to step into the spotlight, and to forge

for themselves the tools necessary to handle its glare. With proper support, Mars here indicates great power to direct people's attention, so much that the natives are prone to grow addicted to it. The martial ego requires attention here, and these natives can be voracious. Struggles for the spotlight and backstage backstabbing are likely for this position. Natives need to learn to recognize their need for attention and meet those needs in appropriate ways. The wise learn to use the mask as both weapon and armor, sword and wand.

Mars here exaggerates the strife latent in this decan. The image of lions fighting may be used to stimulate conflict between people. Yet an image of this decan might also be impressed as a ward against stage fright, a potent courage talisman. A naked man wrestling a lion would serve nicely.

### *Sun in Leo 1*

THE Sun in this decan signifies those at the edge of the spotlight, contemplating whether to step into it or seek refuge. Their spirit is challenged to step into the blazing light and discover the joy and pain within it. They are often good performers, and come swiftly to understand the combination of preparation and spontaneity required when astride life's various stages. With time and some luck, they become masters of directing and concentrating attention.

The Sun is a potent catalyst for this face's powers. Its images, when properly impressed, make for a variety of talismans which draw and concentrate attention. Masks and beacons alike can be consecrated to great effect here.

### *Venus in Leo 1*

THOSE born with Venus in this decan often have a strongly bifurcated relationship to being seen and desired. The natives yearn to be desired by all, yet chaffe at the cage which such attention creates. They are often quite good at broadcasting a seductive image, yet such beacons are hardly selective. The native may attract a number of interested parties, but none that are particularly appropriate. Greater happiness is gained as the native learns to craft an image which is not a mirror of what they think others want, but is instead an authentic, if aestheticized, image of who they truly are. The native must not become seduced by their own ability to seduce others.

Venus here allows for a number of works of attraction. The essential power is to create talismans which serve as “desire traps”—drawing out and concentrating emotional and sexual energy. These can embodied, or anchored to works.

### *Mercury in Leo I*

THOSE born with Mercury in the first face of Leo often understand how to selectively reveal and conceal themselves, to great effect. There may something of the charlatan about them, for their mastery over appearance is like that of the stage magician. Tricks of light and darkness. A common affliction of these natives is the need to perform mentally. The need to appear intelligent or witty is a hunger which the natives have a difficult time detaching themselves from.

An image of Mercury in this decan, if properly contemplated, holds within it the tricks and techniques of both revelation and disguise.

### *Moon in Leo I*

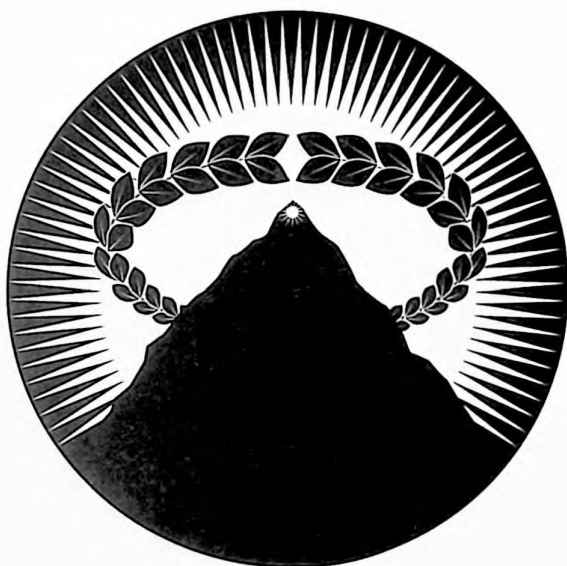
THESE natives are very emotionally receptive to the attention they receive. This vulnerability makes them very sensitive to how they are perceived, and as a result, many grow a protective mask. Because they rely on their appearance for emotional security, they can become very attached to these personae. Their idea of who they are is often very strong, but also inflexible and perhaps a bit too-well defended. These natives need to learn to distinguish the social self from deeper levels of being. Though they may feel like the converse is true, who they are cannot be created or destroyed—it is only the mask which changes.

When the Moon is in the first face of Leo, one can consecrate a mask one wishes to pour themselves into. A persona can thus be energized and melded with here. If the Moon is waning, the favored operation is the separation of self from a given persona.



## LEO II: A CROWN OF LAURELS

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In the second face of Leo the persona is rendered a hospitable host for the spirit. The artificial structure of the mask is thus enlivened, porcelain become flesh. While the first face entailed the hesitant initial encounter between spirit and appearance, the second decan focuses on their sustained conjunction.

In a harmonious relationship with the ego-structure, the spirit interpenetrates the zone of life which is most natural to it. On an external level, happy figures are seen here, externally victorious due to their success in this operation. They are thus celebrated not just for what they do, but who they are.

The Six of Wands represents this decan in the Rider Waite deck of Tarot cards. It pictures a man, wreathed in the laurels of the victor, riding a horse in a parade amongst his peers. Called "Victory" in *Book T* as well as in *The Book of Thoth*, the title and image both harken back to the Roman custom of the *triumphus*, from which the English word "triumph" comes. A *triumphus* was a lavish parade celebrating the commander of a significant military victory. Like the image on the Six of Wands, the *vir triumphus* ("man of triumph")

was crowned with laurels. His procession moved through the streets, trailing the spoils of the successful war, until he reached Jupiter's temple, where he offered sacrifice. Interestingly enough, Jupiter is considered the ruler of this face in both major systems. The celebrated man was treated as king-for-a-day and in some sense underwent apotheosis. Yet despite the honor lavished upon the *vir triumphus*, he was expected to accord himself with dignity and humility. This face thus shows those who are in midst of a public victory.

The spectacle of such victories can be like the Sun itself—giving off far more energy than they take in. Authentic success awakes in everyone who views it the same potential—for everyone has a spirit, and each spirit a destiny. Yet the victory here comes through authenticity, not the perfection of character or moral virtue. It is not the triumph of the ideal man which is celebrated here, but the flawed victory of a human being, whose perfection is not assured merely his great acts. The *Picatrix* speaks of the “rising up of a man who is ignorant and vile” in this face, and Agrippa associates this decan with “base men.” Ibn Ezra compares the figure pictured in this face to a lion in anger. Recognition of one's virtues does not dispel the reality of one's vices.

Friedrich Nietzsche writes of this in the first of his essays in *Untimely Meditations*, where he explores the manner in which losses can be transmuted into victories, and triumphs degraded to the status of defeats. By excessive self-celebration and other immodesties, one turns past successes into future defeats. The negative potential of those exalted in this face is pictured clearly in the Indian *Yavanajātaka*. This text describes a bold woman with wild hair standing on a mountain peak, and adds that she “delights in taking from others.” She has attained an elevated position, and has the strength to take what she desires. Like the other figures which populate this decan, there is privilege here, and the potential to perpetuate a class of sin which only the strong have access to. It is thus the temptations of selfishness and cruelty which stain the triumphal nature of this decan, for nothing tests the character so much as victory. Though the figures pictured in the historical iterations of this decan are largely military, this face illuminates different figures when it shines through the cultural matrix of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Generals take a back seat to entertainers and politicians in our world, for it is they who are most often aggrandized in the way pictured in this decan.

Present here is the strength to accomplish great works and to attain high positions. Yet great works do not guarantee any greatness of character. The



ego is fed lavishly in this face, and there are few who can exult in its light without being blinded.

This decan holds within it the magical power of authenticity—here defined as a harmonious connection between the external sphere in which one acts and the spirit fire within each individual. The alchemical process necessary to achieve this power is work upon the persona or ego which mediates the spirit and what the world sees. Once the persona has become suitable to transmit the spirit's impetus, a fierce and potent authenticity is born. Victory here is assured.

### *Saturn in Leo 11*

THOSE born with Saturn in the second face of Leo are often expected to display ideal solar qualities. Positivity, happiness and strength are often demanded of them in childhood, and they learn to perform what they do not necessarily feel. These expectations are often internalized, and happiness and confidence become something they feel they must live up to rather than simply what they are. Because they spend so much of their time enacting the person they believe they should be, these natives can feel like no one knows who they really are. Nonetheless, under certain circumstances these difficulties make for good leaders and others whose role it is to perform and inspire.

Saturn is in its detriment in all of Leo, and not particularly well suited to this face. Old Kronos' image in this face will bind one to the enactment of a given image—useful in limited circumstances but largely inappropriate for benefic purposes.

### *Jupiter in Leo 11*

THOSE born with Jupiter in Leo's second decan have, if the position is unafflicted, a blessed overflow of personality. Here is the oft quoted wisdom "just be yourself." These natives understand that it is difficult to be anything but oneself and that, despite the effort involved, little is gained in the attempt. Those born with Jupiter here learn to create and inhabit an identity which is in accord with their nature. They grow from a steady increase in self knowledge and learn to enact both their strengths and weaknesses with authentic-

ity. There is, however, some danger of vanity or arrogance, especially if the position is afflicted.

The greater benefic is considered the ruler of this face in both major systems, and is thus well-positioned to grant boons. A talisman impressed with Jupiter's image in this decan will grant its bearer strength, confidence and an increase of reputation. It will also assist in ferrying one to positions of greater prominence and currying the favor of those in power.

### *Mars in Leo II*

THE red planet makes intemperate the mellow heat of this decan, scorching its natives' dispositions. Those born with Mars here have a performative quality. They are also competitive and many have a strong need for recognition. They understand the power of appearances and many become quite skillful in gaining the attention they desire. However, if they do not they are prone to jealousy. These natives may attain positions of prominence, but it is likely that their rise will be contentious.

Mars is not traditionally considered well placed in this face of Leo. Though there is some power over appearance to be gained from the red planet's pass through these degrees, such glammers are better accessed through other celestial combinations.

### *Sun in Leo II*

FOR those born with the Sun here, the solar virtues are strong, even excessive. If Sol is unafflicted, the natives will have clarity of will, honest hearts and strength of personality. Performance and leadership often come naturally. These natives often feel that they have a rightful place, a God-given kingdom. If they are denied their due place or proper respect, they are prone to resentment. Properly regarded, these natives shine like gold, but starved of respect, they can be tyrants and scoundrels. They are creatures of love and wrath.

The Sun is strong in Leo, but has no specific power over this decan. All manner of Solar work is thus profitable during this time, but there is no special benefit to impressing the image of Sol into the scenery of this face.

### *Venus in Leo II*

THOSE born with Venus in the second face of Leo have warm, dramatic and sometimes imperious passions. Many exhibit a love of royal excess. They are expressive in a highly characteristic, individualized manner. They are sometimes emotionally selfish, but often honestly so. Their desires are what they are, and they need to be accepted for who they are. Fortunately, many extend the same courtesy to the people in their lives. Though they are prone to both vanity and jealousy, they are often warm hearted and accepting people.

Venus has a power to weave royal glammers here. While such constructs may increase one's social stature, they are energy-hungry and also likely to generate resentment. Talismanic work is not recommended.

### *Mercury in Leo II*

THOSE born with Mercury in the second face of Leo often see the positive in people and affairs. Their minds are drafted into the cause of keeping the spirit's fire burning bright. To this effect, they can be inspiring, calling to and shining a light on what is best. They often understand the art of performance and with training can excel in expressing themselves publically. Their thinking is often quite egocentric, and blindspots are therefore common. Their minds improve as their self knowledge increases.

Mercury's power in the second face of Leo is useful for the public performance of ideas. A small charm might be made with the messenger's image in this face to facilitate such expressions. The uses of Mercury here are limited to such purposes, though, as many of the messenger's essential works are impeded in this decan.

### *Moon in Leo II*

THOSE born with the Moon in this face, the second of Leo, are possessed of a royal disposition. If Luna is unafflicted, they are honest, warm and expressive. If the Moon is subject to malefaction, jealous and tyrannical qualities may also be present. Regardless the mixture, these natives tend to reify a particular image of themselves and interact with the world through the set

of qualities which they identify with. These natives have great difficulty stepping outside this construct of self. Who they believe themselves to be has great power over their lives, and it behooves them to spend the time necessary to mold this image in the shape of their greatest potentials.

The Moon in the second decan of Leo has power over the generation and corruption of identity. Work can be done while the Moon waxes here to strengthen the personality, and when the Moon wanes, to retrieve the energy invested in it.



## LEO III: THE BANNER

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THE third decan of Leo is ruled by Mars, for challenges abound here. The moment of glory which graces the second face gives way in the third to a spirited struggle. It is not enough to have gained one's rightful place, it must be defended against hostile forces both within and without. The monarch struggles to retain control as the kingdom rebels and the artist wrestles with a wrecked personal life and failing body while trying to remain true to their art. Tenacity and courage are required to fulfill one's role under such trying conditions.

The figures which reside here thus see their place in the world threatened both from within and without. Illness attacks the body, fear afflicts the heart, and enemies close in to take the throne.

The power granted here is the tenacity to fight for the place one has gained, to struggle and be victorious over contrary forces both within and without. One might call this quality courage, but it is not merely a quick surge of bravery, but instead the power of the utterly steadfast heart, which never fails to rise to the challenges present.

This quality of spirit, the invincible heart, is not dependent upon bodily

fortitude or on an advantageous position. Indeed, it is accessible only when those easy strengths are unavailable. When allies have fled, the enemy looms and the body itself betrays you, there you will find the unconquerable heart. It is the solar-martial fire that moves broken limbs. Though the body can be broken, what resides within the heart is untouchable, invincible. This is the hero's heart—a power all possess, but which is awoken in few.

Yet this divine fire does not issue forth to defend the personal and the petty. Its nature transcends the confines of the identity, and to be roused, something bigger than the ego must be invoked. A principle must be raised aloft, a banner bearing the name of Truth, Justice or Beauty. The power which winds through this last face of Leo demands a spiritualization of the solar fire present in the Lion's sign, for it is only to such flags that the heart truly salutes.

Like any form of fire, divine or otherwise, there is danger. Though belief in a principle may give one the strength to hold on while all hope is lost, it is no guarantee that one's cause is right. While this face may abound with images of noble heroes defending the right, just as many tyrants grace its halls, unwilling to yield their thrones, no matter the human cost. An image in the *Yavanajataka* echoes this violent durability, for in it is pictured a woman "seated on an ivory throne, contemplating the murder of her enemies."

This decan grants the power to hold body and spirit together under extreme duress. The spirit commands, the body and mind obey. This relationship between the spirit and body are echoed in the figures pictured for this decan in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*. The image is of a young man wielding a whip, and sad man before him. Here the spirit wields the whip, ready to scourge the body to continue. Those who walk this face must learn what is worth holding on to, and what is not. The infinite endurance of the spirit must not be confused with the limitations of corporeal being.

A fragmentary Hellenistic text, *The 36 Airts of the Zodiac*, attributes the god Serapis to this decan. Serapis was a Hellenised Egyptian diety, whose worship was promulgated by the first Greek pharaoh of Egypt, Ptolemy I Soter. Serapis was associated with the Sun and healing, but also the underworld, for he was syncretized with Osiris, the Egyptian god of death and resurrection.

It is interesting that Serapis was attributed both to the Sun and the underworld, for in ancient Egyptian myth, the underworld was merely where the Sun went at night. This attribution to both the Sun and the underworld speaks to the daily cycle of the Sun's dramatic appearance and disappear-

ance, which has long served as a metaphor for the eternal spirit's relationship with matter. It is indeed the undying spirit which makes the great strength and tremendous resolve present in this decan possible. That Serapis highlights the Sun above and the Sun below also points indirectly toward the important decision that those who walk this decan face—when to give up and let go, for even the Sun surrenders the earth to darkness.

Though it is unlikely that it was the unknown author's intention, it is amusing that Serapis himself was the work of a king striving to consolidate his rule over a hostile culture, the very situation to which this decan speaks.

### *Saturn in Leo III*

THOSE born with Saturn in this decan will be put in situations which require tremendous resolve. Early in life many will find themselves unequal to the demands placed upon them. With time, these natives learn to meet the pressure that they face, and many attain an unbreakable will.

Saturn in this decan binds a person to situations in which they will be forced to defend what they consider rightfully theirs. As a talisman, this is basically an invocation of nemesis, and is likely will bring into manifestation hostile forces.

### *Jupiter in Leo III*

THOSE born with Jupiter in this decan are blessed with great reserves of confidence and determination. They are also able to teach others to dig deep, and ignite the fighting spirit within them. Although they are not lacking in courage, some natives will err on the side of overconfidence—a belief in personal invincibility can easily take root here. They may also come to depend overmuch on their ability to push themselves past natural limits, which leads to physical burnout and resource exhaustion. These problems are not a curse of this position, but the result of abusing its blessing.

The image of Jupiter in this decan can be inscribed so as to create a beacon of courage and hope. The one who holds it gains the power to inspire others similarly. If a struggle does not currently exist, this talisman might call to its owner situations that require its power.



### *Mars in Leo III*

MARS is considered to be the ruler of this decan in both traditional systems. Those born with Mars in this decan have a fierce determination and are relentless when challenged. It is important that they guard against injury from pushing themselves too hard, and learn to acknowledge that although the will may have no limits, the body does.

The image of red Mars in this decan can sheathe the heart in will-forged adamantine. All martial virtues which stem from the heart and the will are found here. The image of Mars in this face can be inscribed or contemplated to unlock one's true capacity for courage. Those who would bear such an image would be wise to heed the same warnings as with those born with this configuration, for there is a definite danger of wielding this fire unwisely and thereby scorching the very throne one wishes to defend.

### *Sun in Leo III*

THOSE born with the Sun in this face of Leo are courageous when stressed, and capable of great determination. Many, especially those for whom the Sun is afflicted, feel embattled even when they are not. These natives may not know when they have won the war, and do not understand when to remove their armor. Though life may have provided them sufficient reason, they tend to think that the next challenge is merely lying in wait, preparing for the moment when they drop their guard. Nonetheless, they are quite capable of rising to life's challenges, and are fierce when pressed.

Though strong in Leo, the Sun has no special power over the third decan. A rite of empowerment may serve to strengthen resolve, but a talisman created to capture the light of Sol in this face may bring with it the embattled qualities which afflict the natives.

### *Venus in Leo III*

IN the third decan of Leo, Venus learns to appreciate the beauty of courage. Those born with Venus in this face appreciate the brave, proud spirit of people, and have a fondness for those who struggle to live their lives authen-

tically. The natives often possess contentious passions themselves, and although they may feel embattled, they may actually end up oppressing others with their own excesses. Though many possess a penchant for unnecessary drama, they are fiercely loyal in both love and friendship, capable of perseverance during hard times.

Venus is not particularly at home in this decan, and her presence here marks a poor time for works of attraction.

### *Mercury in Leo III*

MERCURY in this face tells of those who have the courage to speak under difficult circumstances. With their words they rush to tell the story that has gone unspoken, to make the case so far unheard. They advocate for the voiceless and defend the weak. They are often argumentative, and can be quite stubborn about their own point of view, with an unfortunate tendency to fortify themselves in positions of moral superiority. It is important that they do not become too attached to winning arguments, as there is a tendency to forgo truth for the convenient slogan.

Mercury is ill at ease in this decan of Leo. Mercurial works conducted here will often be marred by unnecessary contention.

### *Moon in Leo III*

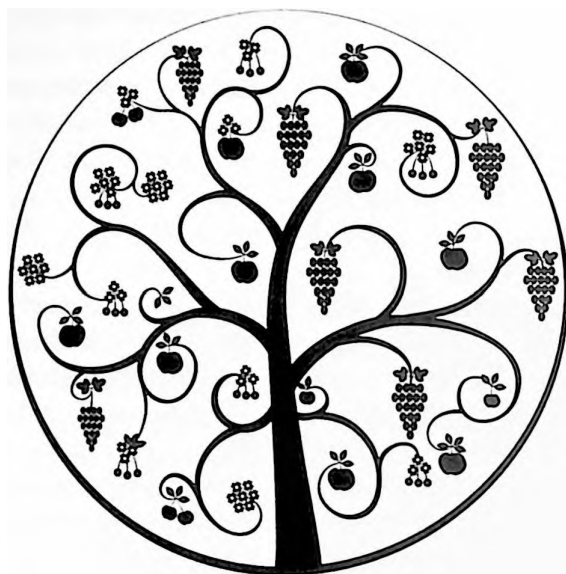
THOSE born with the Moon in the third face of Leo have courageous dispositions, but often possess defensive personalities. The early lives of these natives often involve circumstances in which they must struggle to be themselves. A lack of acceptance in childhood often leaves them feeling like embattled outsiders. They are, nonetheless, well suited to blaze their own trail, for they are often possessed of abundant spirit and great courage.

The Moon's power in the third face of Leo is to reify and disintegrate defensive personality structures. The waxing Moon lends them strength, and the waning Moon helps disassemble them.



## VIRGO I: A TREE BEARING FRUIT

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IN this face are seen images of humility before creation. The spirit watches, listens and tends, unwilling to impose itself rashly upon the order of being. The humble witness thereby perceives many great secrets about the processes of Nature. The gaze falls reverently upon the body of creation, caressing it.

The card given to this decan in the Rider Waite Tarot is the Eight of Pentacles, which pictures a craftsman at work upon a bench, engraving pentacles. He is said to be an apprentice, but of advanced age. Called "Prudence" in *Book T* and in *The Book of Thoth*, this card signifies great attention to small matters. There is also great humility here, for the old apprentice represents a willingness to put away pride and submit instead to the demands of the craft itself. This vision of the craftsman is repeated in the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE *Yavanajataka*, which depicts a man who possesses a "subtle knowledge of crafts" and who is said to be "attached to beauty and skill." The secrets of the created world are revealed to those who approach it with humility and patience.

Mindfulness is also suggested by the attribution of the Greek goddess Themis to this decan in *The 36 Aires of the Zodiac*, an anonymous fragmen-

tary text from the Hellenistic era. Themis was a titaness whose role was to teach observance of divine law, a concept synonymous with her name in ancient Greek. Divine law, those rules are inherent to creation, was clearly differentiated from the laws of men. In many stories Themis served as a wise advisor to Zeus, counseling the "prudence" which became this decan's name in later centuries. In her role as an oracular goddess, wise Themis also revealed the laws of creation to men. She was said to have presided at the famous Oracle at Delphi after having inherited the role from her mother, the earth titaness Gaia. She is said to have spoken to those in trance with the voice of the earth.

The figures which reside in this decan have sharp ears for such chthonic voices. Several images associated with this face highlight its connection to the land. The *Picatrix* speaks plainly of the agricultural bent of this decan, saying that it is a face "of sowing, of plowing, of the making of trees to sprout, of gathering bunches of grapes." The *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* describes "The figure of a good maid, and a man casting seeds; it signifieth getting of wealth, ordering of diet, plowing, sowing, and peopling." It is the capacity for humble observation of, and careful tending to, the created world which lends this decan its disposition to fruitful works.

The maidens pictured in nearly every iteration of this decan tend to the Tree of Life, pruning it to keep it strong. Though this labor may seem tedious, it is this patient care which ensures the finest fruit. The succulence and beauty of fruit and flower are the contradictory result of abstention and fastidiousness.

Like Eve tempted by the tree's fruit, those within this face experience tension between prudence and delight. It is prudence which grows the finest fruit, but why practice such a virtue if it does not lead to delight? Grain is useless if not harvested, and fruit rots if not eaten. Why cultivate a tree that does not flower or offers no wood? Yet, the plucked fruit grows no longer, and what is devoured ceases to be. In human terms, this contradictory mystery is embodied in the figure of virgin, whose image appears in the decanic visions of both Agrippa and Ibn Ezra.

The first decan of an earth sign, this face provides initiation into the mysteries of incarnation. It teaches the difference between the touched and the untouched, and the prudence of postponing delight until the fruit is ripe. It makes for careful craftsman, thoughtful merchants and wise farmers, though many other transformers of the *prima materia* are here as well. Though the

formulae of this face is one of humility, it results in works of surprising glory. Creation ripens for those who can hear and heed its voice.

### *Saturn in Virgo 1*

GREAT diligence is expected of those born with Saturn in the first face of Virgo. In their youth they may be unfairly criticized, or held to exacting standards. But with time these natives come to identify with the need for mindfulness and exactitude. Saturn here lays the foundation for a level of mental organization and attention to detail which is of value in both intellectual and craft oriented fields. If Saturn's position is too strong or afflicted, the psyche is over-structured, and a neurotic or overly particular personality may result. These natives often have difficulty navigating moral grey areas, for they have strong feelings of right and wrong.

Saturn's essential power in the first face of Virgo is to bind the attention to the details of a given process. In so far as this discipline is desirable, a binding such as this may be performed. However, having no traditional dignity in this face of Virgo, a talisman of the worn and permanent variety is not advisable.

### *Jupiter in Virgo 1*

PLEASANT Jupiter finds an awkward home in the first decan of Virgo. This face filters attention through a microscopic lens, which is antithetical to Jupiter's expansive power. These natives may have a hard time expanding into the world, for it is in their nature to scrutinize themselves and their place in the world rather than to look outward. They are, however, often adept in the technical aspects of their field, and possess an uncommon capacity for self analysis. Their mistake is to believe that the key to greater success is further analysis of themselves and their work. Often it is an excess of analysis and the resulting shyness that prevents them from having the success which is their due.

Jupiter in the first decan of Virgo grants the ability to look deeply into the details of a given matter. Yet Jupiter's blessing too easily turns to excess, resulting in monomania, such an abundance of detail that the larger picture is lost. Permanent talismans picturing Jupiter in this face are likely to bring

little benefit, and should be avoided in favor of other planets, such as the Sun, in this decan.

### *Mars in Virgo I*

THOSE born with red Mars in the first decan of Virgo derive power from their attention to detail and ability to detect and address flaws others may miss. In their actions, these natives often strive both for the heights of purity and the depths of debauchery. Periods of ritual fasting and abstinence may alternate with those of decadence. There is thus a twinned fervor for both the pure and the corrupt. For the more conscious of these natives, these opposites are accepted and treated as complementary.

As a magical formulae, Mars in the first decan of Virgo can be used to empower oneself to complete a course of work with absolute fastidiousness. It can also be used to corrupt works—a conjuration of the apple-devouring worm. The literal form of this would be to blight crops, but this is only an obvious manifestation.

### *Sun in Virgo I*

THE Sun in the first face of Virgo makes for natives that are thoughtful, attentive and insightful. Those born with Sol here are interested in the processes of the world. Unless other elements of the chart indicate egocentricity, they are humble of disposition, far more interested in creation's intricacies than themselves. They are thus modest, and require little praise. Though patient with the world, they may be less so with other people, who with their rough ignorance often violate the subtle laws these natives comprehend.

According to one system, the Sun is the ruler of this face, and in its light bloom the subtle virtues of this decan—modesty, patience, and diligence. The image of Sol in this decan might be graven into the proper medium to impress these qualities into a talisman. Though less spectacular in nature than many of the other decanic talismans, the simple virtues which arise in this face have great power.

### *Venus in Virgo 1*

VENUS in the first face of Virgo presents several challenges to its natives. The natives are in one part moved toward chastity and moderation, while in the other they lust for rapture and abandon. Learning to tolerate and even appreciate the order and disorder of their passions is important, for if they adhere to a more simple code they will be weakened by internal conflict. They are particular in their desires and aesthetics, and have a talent for observing flaws. Nonetheless, these natives will be immensely pleased by details that those with less keen eyes miss. They are humble in love, and may thus be taken advantage of by the more callous.

Venus is traditionally considered to be in her fall in Virgo, and has no special affinity for this face. Venusian works are thus generally unprofitable while the bright planet resides here. A talisman graven with the lady's image in this face is more likely to produce austerity and isolation than wealth and affection.

### *Mercury in Virgo 1*

IN the first face of Virgo, Mercury gifts its natives with highly analytic, patient minds. Unless afflicted, Mercury's position in this decan indicates a number of mental blessings. These natives absorb and process detailed information well and are adept at a variety of technical disciplines. Their minds tend toward calm and, unless otherwise indicated, they are not prone to the hyperactivity common in mentally active individuals. Their logical and concrete orientation may, however, make it harder for them to understand the complexities of psychology, and they may thus have some difficulty comprehending people's motives.

Mercury rules all of Virgo, and is considered the ruler of this decan in the triplicity system. Mercury's image in this face can be impressed to make a talisman which hosts the clean, calm wavelength of intelligence which runs through it. A talisman such as this would be of benefit in commerce, scholarship or any highly technical field.



### *Moon in Virgo 1*

THOSE born with the Moon in the first face of Virgo are of a modest and diligent disposition unless other factors intervene severely. These natives are comforted by tending to and maintaining order in their lives. A well kept life provides a level of emotional support for them. Emotionally, they tend towards self containment, and may have a difficult time accepting other's nurturing. Though ordinarily composed, they yearn for and sometimes indulge in moments of wild abandon. They have complex inner lives and many find they need a certain measure of time without others present in order to maintain their emotional equilibrium.

In the first face of Virgo, the Moon nurtures what she holds in her womb carefully. Luna works to aid in the manifestation of material things here when waxing, and reveals their flaws and excesses when waning. Though lacking any spectacular virtue, the Moon's time here is adequate for most lunar purposes.



## VIRGO II: THE HAMMER AND THE ANVIL

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THE first face of Virgo pictured an initiation into the truth of the created world, laying bear the potentialities of the *prima materia*. In the second face the ongoing shaping and refining of the material is the focus. To this end the spirit wraps matter around itself, forming an exoskeleton, like the casing of a seed, a suit of armor or a cocoon. This state fortifies but also conceals the spirit's light. The inherent beauty of spirit is thus disguised, visible only in the clever and gainful manner by which it shapes the world.

Several images of this face take as their theme encasement, for the figures pictured here have layers of covering. Ibn Ezra pictures a man "all covered with hair. On him are three garments, one of leather, the second of silk, and the third is a red mantle." The man is sheathed not merely with a layer or two of cloth, but first of hair, and then with three layers of clothing. What is inside is both protected and concealed. The *Picatrix* text also explicitly describes multiple layers of dress. In it is seen a man "dressed in leather and upon the vestment of leather another vestment of iron." The increasing density of the encasement is attested to by the outermost vestment of iron. Meanwhile,

Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* describes a figure "clothed with a skin" and another "holding a bag." Although this image lacks multiple layers of garments, the purpose of a bag is to enclose, to encase and to keep, and thus repeats the theme using a different symbol.

The spirit has enclosed itself in a dense body here in order to gain control over gross layers of the physical plane and to oversee its processes with a keen eye. One result of such attention is the capacity to improve one's financial position. The *Picatrix* states that this is a face "of desires, and of wealth, of tribute," while Agrippa writes that it signifies "gain, scraping together of wealth and covetousness."

Indeed, the card in the Rider Waite tarot deck allocated to this face is called "Gain" in *Book T* and Crowley's *Book of Thoth*. The card, the Nine of Pentacles, depicts a woman with a hooded falcon on her gloved hand, standing amidst a profusion of grape vines in the garden of a fine house. Though it is said simply to signify material gain, the images presented conceal a nest of meaning. This woman is equipped for falconing, but the bird's head is hooded. This provides an interesting repetition of early themes, for the falcon, and other birds of prey, have long represented the power of the spirit to soar over the material world. Yet this falcon is hooded, enclosed in darkness, like unto the enclosure of spirit in matter suggested by previous images. The falcon, when unleashed, also grants mastery over the garden, for its prey are the vermin which threaten the health of the vines. The woman thus protects the garden, her bird ready to seize all who would interrupt its gainful process.

Yet when the grapes are harvested and the wine is made, there will be no evidence of the falcon's bloody seizures, nor of the woman's vigilance. The beauty of the finished product of the process conceals the pain and toil utterly necessary for its creation. This dual arcanum is well represented by ugly Haephus, legendary smith-god of ancient Greek lore. Though himself crippled and hideous, he was responsible for smithing the most potent and beautiful artifacts in all creation. It is only through heat, force and sweat that the most delicate and elegant works are created. The dual mystery revealed is of the intimate relationship between beauty and ugliness—the secret of industry and labor.

The relationship between these qualities is echoed again in the consort which Hephaestus is paired with. For in Greek myth the ugly smith, the living factory, is united with Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty herself. This pairing is echoed in those planets said to rule this decan. The descending order

system allocates rulership to graceful Venus, while the triplicity system gives it to demanding, soot-stained Saturn. This conjunctio of opposites is the key to this decan's formulae and many of life's mysteries.

The strange truth of production is revealed here, the assembly lines, vats of acid, animal testing, conveyor belts, and sweat concealed by the simple being of the finished work. Alchemically, this face provides understanding of the many beautiful and repulsive states the matter attains throughout the Magnum Opus. On an emotional level, the visions that stain this face teach one not to be repulsed by process, nor to be glamourised by the apparent perfection of a finished thing. On a practical level, this face brings one to inspect material processes and note the efficiency or lack thereof. The residents of this decan oversee the ever-transforming world, guiding and shaping the Great Work on a microcosmic level.

### *Saturn in Virgo II*

THOSE born with Saturn in the second face of Virgo are careful and devoted to process. In their youth, these natives are often criticized and micromanaged, but as they mature they develop discipline. Being very concerned with process, they tinker with methods and scheduling in order to meet their somewhat compulsive need for efficiency. They are capable of precision and discipline, but their works are sometimes marred by a tendency toward perfectionism. Lost in the process, they may leave matters hovering at the edge of completion.

In one tradition, Saturn is thought to be the ruler of the second face of Virgo. Kronos' excellence in this decan is quite clearly the light he sheds on the structure of process. He may thus be called on here to bind awareness to all of the details of a project in order to ensure its quality. Though a talisman might be made to anchor this general awareness to its bearer, the stressful, compulsive aspects of this face's energy should be considered. Isolated bindings to single processes are more likely to achieve the intended goal with a minimum of unpleasant side effects.

### *Jupiter in Virgo II*

JUPITER is challenging for those born under this face's auspices, for the emphasis on microscopic detail which comes with this decan is contrary to the expansive, holistic perspective which it is Jupiter's essential role to provide. The natives' cognizance encompasses a great number of data points and they easily master technical protocols, yet when they are engaged in a project they are prone to lose perspective on those areas of their life which do not include the present endeavor.

Jupiter is without essential dignity in most of Virgo, but the big planet does encounter its bound in the middle decan. Though not of exceeding power, Jupiter does have a strength in these degrees which he lacks in the rest of the sign. If approached within his bound, Jupiter's blessings of efficiency can be extended to a given project or process, or imbibed as an empowerment.

### *Mars in Virgo II*

IN the second face of Virgo, red Mars' gleaming sword becomes a delicate but precise scalpel. The natives have a knack for fault-finding, but many are also talented problem solvers. They have the ability to dissect a process, locate the problems, and surgically remove them. These qualities are of benefit in the native's professional life, but this critical tendency can create problems in their personal life, especially with respect to romantic partners.

Being a trigon lord of Virgo, Mars has sufficient strength here to accomplish most of those works natural to his sphere. The red planet can be called upon in this face to reveal the flaws in a given process or project, and to gain the strength to address them.

### *Sun in Virgo II*

THOSE born with the Sun in this face tend to identify strongly with the work they do. Their labor and its product are important to them, and so it is critical that they find a type of labor which is satisfying to them, else they risk a deep alienation. They are often industrious, and fascinated with the processes of the natural and human worlds. There is an alchemical bent to these natives,

and some may find the Great Work a proper path, or at least at least a fitting metaphor, for their relationship to the world.

The Sun has no special dignity in this face, making Sol's time in this decan unsuitable for potent solar works. Nonetheless, if petitioned properly, the Sun here can be made to shed light on the details of one process or another.

### *Venus in Virgo II*

CONSIDERED the ruler the in descending order system of planetary attribution, Venus has a special role to play in this decan. With an eye on a perfect outcome, she guides the mind toward the labor invisible in the finished product. Those born with Venus here are easy to displease, and many have a very definite idea about the right and wrong way of going about things. They prize quality, and their critical eye proceeds from a desire for things to be as close to perfect as they can be. These natives may hold themselves and their works to impossible standards.

Venus has special dignity in this decan, and is thus useful for the operations natural to her sphere when placed in this decan. Her special power is to draw objects of great quality, and also to create glammers of perfection. A talisman with her image will lend its bearer the power to appraise the value of things, and to see hidden faults and virtues. However, such a thing also brings with it the perfectionism which afflicts the natives.

### *Mercury in Virgo II*

SWIFT Mercury is strong in this face, as he is in all of Virgo. Those born while the messenger is here are blessed with thorough, analytical minds. They have a talent for thinking through a process from start to finish and thus many excel at laying plans. They are critical of others' opinions, and prefer facts to visions. If Mercury is not overly impeded, their intelligence is easily applied to both academic subjects and business matters.

Mercury is exalted in Virgo, and thus ripe for all manner of Hermetic operations. Though a great number of works can be completed while the messenger is in the face, a work of empowerment or a properly crafted talisman

will result in increased clarity of thought, the ability to weave fine plans, and greater facility with the written and spoken word.

### *Moon in Virgo II*

THE Moon in this decan of Virgo lends its natives a sensitive, discriminating and industrious disposition. Their tastes are often quite specific, and quality is important to them. They are generally hard workers who take their tasks seriously. Because they take their work personally, it is difficult for them if they are in positions which do not afford them control of the process. Many thrive as craftsmen or artists, for in these cases they can moderate every step of creation. They tend to be emotionally self-reliant, and may have difficulty asking for the help when they require it.

The Moon in this decan is adequate for basic lunar operations, but having no special potency here, she is insufficient for grand works.





## VIRGO III: THE SARCOPHAGUS

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THE last decan of Virgo shows the fate of all matter—to be brought to perfection and then crumble to dust, for there is naught created which is invulnerable to the ever-shifting tides of generation and corruption. The spirit gazes upon its inevitable separation from matter here, contemplating the consequences of its brief union.

Many of the images associated with this face picture the forces of decay. Ibn Ezra describes a white woman praying to god, but the very hands she prays with are leprous. The link between the material and spiritual forces—the hands which pray—are beginning to decay, promising the connection's inevitable termination. Meanwhile, The Latin *Picatrix* describes it as “a face of weakness, old age, illness, sloth, the injury of limbs and the destruction of other people.” It pictures a “pale man of large body wrapped in a white linen cloth,” suggesting a burial shroud or the process of mummification. Mummification is pictured directly in *Liber Hermetis*, which says of this decan “It is like a mummy, its whole body is like one who is buried.” Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* continues the jolly theme, picturing “a

white woman and deaf, or an old man leaning on a staff." These images are described as signifying "weakness, infirmity, loss of members, destruction of trees, and depopulation of lands." Indeed, Time and Space are diseases for which there is only one cure.

In this face we ponder the ultimate result of material things. The limits of all created works are here considered. This decan thus has the power to break the pride of all created things by showing them their inevitable end. Those who reside in this decan, the leprous woman and the aging man, are pressed to admit to the infirmity of the flesh. This is a dark vision, though once accepted it grants far reaching sight. One gains the ability to look beyond the present, seeing consequences as clearly as actions. The ability to see unto the 7<sup>th</sup> generation is gained.

In the Rider Waite Tarot the Ten of Pentacles is ascribed to this decan. Within the card sits an aged man, not unlike the one described by Agrippa. Yet unlike his sickly counterpart, this senior rests upon a comfortable chair within a luxurious house. A man, woman and child are pictured in the background, along with a pair of dogs. The family before him may be his descendants, or perhaps a vision of an earlier stage of his own life. Regardless, he now sits on the outside, pondering their meaning. *Book T* and *The Book of Thoth* both title this card "Wealth."

While it can indicate the possession of wealth as the culmination of a material process, its meaning is not limited to this interpretation. Indeed, the pensive nature of the elder pictured on this card suggests that wealth is here posed as a question, to be riddled out. What, given the fate of all created things, is truly valuable?

This decan is the last decan of Virgo, itself last in order of the Earth Signs. It thus represents the end of a material process. Escorted by wealth on one side and death on the other, the residents of this face cross the threshold into the tomb. Alone in the burial chamber with silent centuries, they dialogue with the corpse all will become about the value of all things. The importance of legacies becomes clear, for though all works face eventual decay, some endure for aeons. For just as no thing continues forever, all leave something behind. There is no life which does not bestow upon the world an inheritance, even if it is no more than a feast for scavengers.

This dialogue with inevitability, focused upon the finity of all works and lives, makes clear the value of every irreplaceable moment. In comprehending the ongoing cycle of generation and corruption, one is freed from fear,

for most terrors are petty, and disappear when the shadow of inevitability falls across them. This discussion reveals the importance of things as they are—arising and receding—and deserving of love and attention.

Such revelations banish the tomb and replace it with strangely ecstatic visions. The *Yavanajataka* pictures a graceful, smiling woman with flowers in her hair, stumbling in intoxication. The flower in her hair is from the sacred Asoka tree, whose name means “sorrow-less.” Her drunken steps are those of all creation, participating ecstatically in the endless dance of impermanence. All arises, all recedes. No choice remains but a sorrow-less embrace of the rhythm.

The power of this face brings all material processes to their end, simultaneously revealing their full value and terminating them. Heavy queries meet the eyes of those who gaze upon this face, yet beyond the vision of the tomb there is the capacity to embrace the flawed whole of creation. This decan’s value as an initiatory and magical formulae is great.

### *Saturn in Virgo III*

IN this face Saturn highlights the need to come to terms with the corruptibility of all things—a heavy vision. These natives are wont to encounter ancient things, both those preserved and those fallen into dust. They may find themselves drawn to preserving things against the ravages of time, or helping others understand the necessity of passing.

Saturn has some strength in the last face of Virgo, particularly within the degrees of his bound. Here Saturn deals with highly entropic forces. His excellence is in either quickening time’s ravages or preserving things against them.

### *Jupiter in Virgo III*

EBULLIENT Jupiter is challenged by the dark mysteries of this decan. Many of the natives find it difficult to keep their spirits high, for hope does not rear its head easily here. They have a tendency toward pessimism, yet are better able to face grim realities than most. With time, they are able to let the truth of eventual decay permeate their perspectives without falling prey to melan-

choly, and to understand the power of legacies and lineages.

Jupiter is ill-placed in this decan, and has little to offer the petitioner.

### *Mars in Virgo III*

THOSE born with Mars in this face of Virgo have a talent for deconstruction. They have an eye for the weakness in the structure of ideas, people and things, and thus a great capacity for destruction. Yet unless angered, they are not destructive people. In fact, knowing weakness, many move to protect what they hold dear from exploitable flaws. They may attack weaknesses in order to reveal them. Though this might serve in some areas of life, it may create difficulties in their romantic life if they do not consciously moderate their critical tendencies.

Mars has not only trigonal dignity in this face, but also encounters his bound here, granting him additional power. In this decan the red planet disassembles. Its excellence is to destroy what has been created, to bring material things to ruin. Though suitable for select operations, a talisman will draw such power to itself continually, and may impoverish the bearer and damage their health.

### *Sun in Virgo III*

THOSE born with the Sun in the last decan of Virgo are thoughtful, and look toward the ultimate result of things. They are far-sighted and consider the consequences of their actions. Though often possessed of reserved dispositions, many are subject to wild episodes, for they know that their lives are finite. At times they are liberated by this sense of finity, while at others they rage against it. Though chased by melancholy, with time and effort they grow wise and leave behind intentional legacies.

As the Sun moves through the final decan of Virgo, it approaches the equinox. This quarterly station along the Sun's route has a power all its own, and it is the rites and prayers appropriate to the equinox which should be directed toward Sol here.

### *Venus in Virgo III*

VENUS is in her fall in all of Virgo, yet in this face she reaches the single degree of her greatest impediment, for it is here that the fragile truth of beauty is revealed—the fact that all flesh and fruit must inevitably rot. For those natives who embody this beauty, there is often a struggle to accept this fact. Their understanding of the fragility of form is hard to bear, and may lead some toward the preservation of youth's appearance at increasingly severe costs. Many find themselves obsessed with the figure of the forever-young maiden. Yet Venus here is also key to unlocking that beauty which is immortal in nature—the perfect animating the imperfect at every moment. The desire for the permanent beauty can be sated here, but not by conveying immortality on the flesh, but by finding it within cycles of generation and corruption.

As stated above, Venus is tremendously afflicted in this decan, especially in the degree of her fall. She is thus rendered deeply unsuitable for the works generally allotted to her sphere. Rather than beautifying, images of Venus in this face tend to destroy desirability and fecundity, like a plague of locusts in a chosen garden.

### *Mercury in Virgo III*

MERCURY, exalted in all of Virgo, sees his degree of maximum exaltation placed in this face and is given governorship of this decan in the descending order method. Those born with Mercury here often have excellent intellects, capable of careful, sober analysis. They are good judges, for their decisions are thoughtful and consider future ramifications. Many are able to correctly ascertain the value of things, and thereby excel in commerce. A scholarly and studious mind is also not uncommon in these natives, and many are thus disposed toward academic pursuits.

Mercury is at the height of his power in this face of Virgo, and those works which belong to him benefit greatly. A talisman with his image in this face provides sober judgment, wisdom in financial matters and general acuity of the mind.

### *Moon in Virgo III*

THOSE born with the Moon in the third decan of Virgo have sensitive, thoughtful dispositions. They are aware of the fragility of physical bodies, and many have maladies which makes this universal truth difficult to ignore. Many of them are careful about what they take in, and many come to follow strict diets and other careful health regimens. Yet just as many react in the opposite manner, and indulge themselves during life's short theater. It is common for them to alternate between extreme prudence and wild indulgence. These natives are often reserved, caring, and have great sympathy for the unfortunate.

Though the Moon possesses some essential dignity in the third face of Virgo, it is not preferable for most lunar workings. When waning, Luna's energy is good for detoxification of the physical and subtle bodies, and when waxing, for the ingestion of fortifying tonics and other nourishing medicines. However, when in this face the Moon is unsuitable for most works of manifestation, for what is brought into being will be fragile, and prone to sicknesses of various sorts.



## LIBRA I: A BLIND FOLD AND A SWORD

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IN this face Justice emerges, clad in flowing robes and come with scales and blade to set the world aright. Yet the world she enters is so far asleep to the imbalance within it.

This unawakened state is pictured clearly in the card attributed to this decan in the Rider Waite tarot, the Two of Swords. Beneath a crescent Moon, a blind folded woman sits before the seashore, holding a pair of crossed swords before her. Several elements of this image allude to the arousal of an as yet unconscious force. That it is night places this scene beneath the threshold of waking consciousness, and the shining sliver of a Moon and the presence of the ocean confirm it. The blindfold also attests to this reading, yet the blindfold serves another purposes in this image—it constructs a resemblance between the woman and Justice herself. For Justice, like the woman pictured, is also commonly depicted wearing a blindfold, a white robe, and holding a sword. Perhaps it is Justice herself who has dragged herself from the deeps and come to sit upon the wet shore.

But the sleeper must awaken. The image of this decan on the walls of the



Schifanoia villa shows a man blowing a horn, and in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* Agrippa describes an "an angry man with a pipe," and goes on to state that it is a face of "helping the miserable and weak against the powerful and wicked." Furthermore, the *Picatrix* adds that this is "a face of justice, truth, good judgments, the completeness of justice of the people and weak person, of doing good for the indigent." On a social level, the figures here wake the sleeping masses to the injustice all around them.

The principle of justice emerges bombastically here, waking those within this decan to disequilibrium in worlds both small and large. The emergence of the principle is a good thing, for it is only through recognition that injustice can be remedied. Yet the re-equilibration entails more than its mere recognition.

Though justice's clarion call breaks dreams, the emergence of the principle of balance also gives rise to balance's child—peace. Indeed, this card is called "Peace Restored" in *Book T* and simply "Peace" in *the Book of Thoth*. The relationship of this decan to peace is a complex one, though, as Justice's horn shatters that peace which conceals inequalities, yet it is only through their recognition and rectification that a lasting peace might be wrought. There is thus a polarity within this decan's power, for righteousness and a love of peace are often at odds.

The principle of balance or justice calls from the underworld Maat, the ancient Egyptian goddess known best for her role in the judgment of the soul, wherein the deceased's heart is weighed against an ostrich feather. However, Maat's role was more than stern judge, for she also represented and enforced the philosophical and social principle of balance which was thought to guide both the human and divine worlds. Indeed, peace and justice between the members of a society are the bedrock of social order, and the well spring of law. Maat thus represented not just the soul's justice, but social justice, as well.

This face thus has a strong legal component—the power to bring evidence before the court's eyes and pull hidden testimonies to awareness. This legal aspect is attested to by its association with the Erinyes in *The 36 Airts of the Zodiac*, a fragmentary Hellenistic text. The Erinyes, more commonly known as the Furies, were a trio of underworld goddesses who punished transgression against divine law. They sought out the murderer, the liar and the blasphemer. Though described as monstrous, they were servants of justice. Indeed those who had been wronged by a criminal who went unpunished could petition the Erinyes to balance the scales.

Though the scales are a common attribute to all three of Libra's decans, they are also pictured explicitly in Ibn Ezra's rendition of this decan. He describes "A man in a shop in the market with scales in his hand," and goes on to state that "he wishes to buy and sell." Here justice dons the more practical garb of fairness, overseeing commerce and ensuring mutually beneficial exchange. The Indian *Yavanajataka* depicts the mercantile aspect of this face as well, showing "a man in the market-place with the implements of his trade prepared."

While fair trade and social justice are prime concerns in this face, its true object is relationships. Legal proceedings and commerce are essentially about the balance between two entities. Indeed peace or strife between individuals is what determines social order, and consensus is the very root of the law. Fairness and reciprocity must underlie all friendships and romances if they are to last. This face shines a light on these dynamics, bringing what is troublesome to the light of conscious recognition. The core principles of ethical interaction with other beings are thus revealed in this face.

Maat emerges from the underworld in this face, scales in her hand. The terrible Erinyes follow behind, yet so does Peace, for she is the sister of Justice. This decan drags transgressors to court, and weighs the trade of both merchants and lovers. There is no interaction not weighed by Maat, for the judgment of the Heart is ongoing.

### *Saturn in Libra 1*

SATURN, exalted in all of Libra, exposes and judges injustices in the first face of the Scales. Those born with Saturn here will discover what unfairness abounds in the world. Though motivated by justice, and understanding of the fundamental principle of equilibrium, they are often blind to how their own actions jostle the scales, and may evidence a certain hypocrisy early in life. With time they learn to apply the same principles to themselves that they judge the world by.

Exalted in Libra, Saturn is strong in this face and his force is more than sufficient for those works which he governs. Saturn's particular power in this face is to bind one into confrontation with the karma they have accrued. Nonetheless, one who would call another to account is unlikely to escape reckoning themselves. Few go blameless before the Erinyes.

### *Jupiter in Libra 1*

THOSE born with Jupiter in the first face of Libra are inspired by justice, and often hold balance as their highest philosophical principle. They are often graceful in their dealings with people, and thus gain benefits from them. Many of these natives are also skillful mediators, capable of dealing with the strife which arises between people. They are also generally fair-minded, inclined to weigh opinions before coming to conclusions. Many are also sympathetic to the plight of the unfortunate, and willing to work on their behalf. Though principled, they tend to focus overmuch on their own goodness, and may turn a blind eye to their transgressions.

Though not its ruler, Jupiter has some strength in this face of Libra. Images of Jupiter in this face may be drawn to obtain mercy from the law or good luck in legal proceedings.

### *Mars in Libra 1*

THOSE who are born while Mars is in this face are slow to defend themselves, but quick to come to the aid of another. Because those born with Mars here are often hesitant to address the slights and injuries done to them, they often deprive themselves of the very protection they are so swift to provide others with. When roused, though, they are fierce in the pursuit of justice, so much so that they may commit further injustices to remedy the first. These natives must learn to walk a careful tightrope between peace and justice.

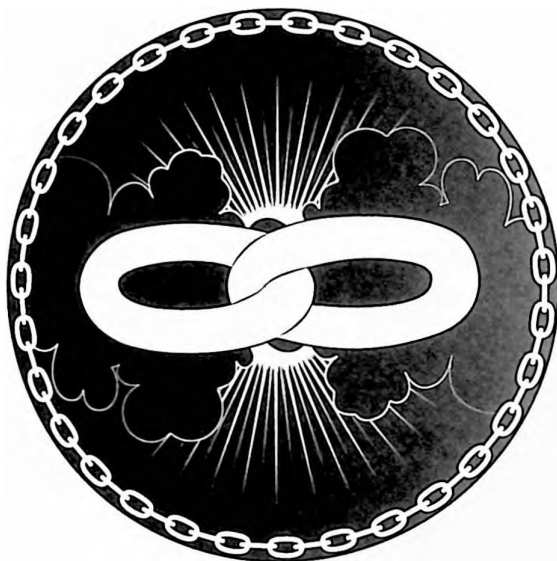
Mars is unfortunate in all of Libra, and has no special dignity in its first face. Martial operations are severely impeded during this time and images of the red planet in this decan have little use.

### *Sun in Libra 1*

THOSE born with the Sun in the first decan of Libra desire equanimity and peace between people, but rarely receive their wish. They believe in fairness and strive, in their way, to make the world a better place. They often accomplish this in their works, but in their personal lives they are often less successful, for they are often blind to the small injustices committed within their

## LIBRA II: TWO LINKS OF A CHAIN

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WHILE in the first face of Libra appeared the sword bearing ladies of justice, whose blades separate, in the second we encounter a priest presiding over a marriage, binding together. The work of Maat continues, but shifts focus to those bound in lasting union. The promises and contracts that link people together are created and tested here. Weak links are exposed, but so also is the true heart revealed.

It begins with a promise. Where it goes, however, depends on the nature of what is promised, as well the actions of those involved. Images of both heartbreak and the good life abound for this decan. Contrary to the pattern of most decans, it is the older images of this decan which are more optimistic. The *Picatrix* describes “A black man having a journey of marriage and joy,” and adds that “this is a face of quiet, joy, abundance, of the good life.” The *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* states that it signifies “security of life with plenty of good things.” These are the happy result of agreements wisely made and held to.

The marriage mentioned by the *Picatrix* lies at the very root of this face’s

meaning, for it is the archetype of all lasting unions. Marriage, especially in traditional societies, involved a thorough binding of two people's fates. The partner's fortune was like unto one's own, and naught but death could make it otherwise. The success of a marriage was, and is, determined by two factors. First, whether the partners are appropriate for one another—the wisdom of the match. The second factor is whether the two in union remain steadfast to in regard to the vows spoken, as well as more subtle, unstated expectations. The rules extend to all partnerships, business and otherwise.

This is thus a face of lasting unions and blended karma. The choice of whom to chain oneself to, and under what terms, is therefore critical. Both sacred covenants and profane deals occur here. The key to such agreements are the terms, for one may do business with the devil himself if the contract is worded well enough, while an agreement poorly made can bring strife even between the best of friends.

The contract is both weapon and armor in this decan, for it both protects and compels. The contract has been associated with Saturn since the Babylonian phase of astrology. As such, it is no surprise that there is little disagreement regarding Saturn's rulership of this face. In Libra, the slow planet is in its exaltation, and excels at the binding-together which is this decan's essential action. Yet Saturn is also infamous for distributing suffering.

Indeed, the breaking of happy marriages and fruitful alliances is as much the subject of this face as their joyful continuation. The Three of Swords is given to this decan, and the Rider Waite card hosts a grim image. Against a background of storm clouds, three swords pierce a heart. Called "Sorrow" in both *Book T* and *The Book of Thoth*, this card clearly displays the pain of betrayal. Here is the sorrow of an alliance betrayed, a wife abandoned, a husband cuckolded. In every promise lurks this possibility, and it is precisely because of this that one's agreements must be written with such care.

Yet oaths have their own guardians. Among the ancient Greeks, the daimon Horkos presided over and protected oaths. Brother to the fearful Erinyes, the furies, who chased the criminals who escaped human law, Horkos punished those who broke their oaths. While the pain of the betrayed is obvious, the betrayer too must face consequences.

This face also includes those situations where one has been bound to an obligation which they cannot happily fulfill. Unwise commitments are seen, and those in such a position face the choice of honoring their word and suffering or breaking their oath but gaining some freedom. Although wisdom

can prevent one from falling into such a bind, it offers no salvation for one so caught.

The power of the contract creates more than misery, though. It is only earnest commitment which allows relationships to endure both lean harvests and fat returns. The power of obligation fixes volatile passions, and when properly engaged, lays a firm foundation for the good life. Yet, perhaps the most fundamental and potent promises are those made to oneself, for there is little that one capable of making and keeping such an agreement cannot achieve.

This power of this face is nearly ideal for the binding of two things together, whether they be people in marriage, business entities, or merely a promise to oneself. It contains the formulae not only for knitting together, but continuing in happy union, and is therefore an arcanum of wonderful power.

### *Saturn in Libra II*

THOSE born with Saturn in the second face of Libra come to know the principles upon which solid agreements are built, and with time understand that it is these commitments which underpin most of the human world. These natives will suffer betrayals, yet these will serve as lessons on commitment and trust. Many of those born with Saturn in this face attain wisdom about the laws of the human world and those greater laws which encompass it. They have a good grasp of systems and as they age many become excellent organizers.

Saturn, exalted in all of Libra, is also regarded near-universally as the ruler of this face. Contracts can be sealed here and agreements made to last. Saturn has great power to bind persons together. A permanent talisman of Saturn can be constructed here to good effect. Such a creation will protect the bearer, as well providing a greater measure of calm and discipline. Their actions will be guided so that a minimum of negative karma is generated. Though there may be no finer place for Saturn to reside, a talisman such as this should still only be worn sparingly, for the slow planet's leaden rays, no matter how refined, are still inimical.

### *Jupiter in Libra II*

THOSE born with Jupiter in this face have luck and often wisdom in their relationships. They are diplomatic, and many have a talent for bringing people into agreement. The natives are accommodating and willing to negotiate, for many of them believe that most interests can be brought into happy accord. In fact, many of those born with Jupiter here may find it difficult to accept it when agreement is not possible. There is thus a touch of naivete, which may find them surprised when others' actions do not follow the terms they accept.

In this face Jupiter can be called on to bring people into agreement, and is especially useful for matters that involve contracts or other structured agreements. Though beneficent, Jupiter here is not omnipotent, for not all disputes can be remedied. One should take care also not to bring together those who cannot possibly hold to the terms of an agreement.

### *Mars in Libra II*

HOT tempered Mars encounters difficulty in this rule-bound decan. The natives are likely to draw dishonorable types to them, and suffer betrayals. Likewise, they will many times find themselves agreed to conditions which they cannot abide. Bound and discontent, many of these natives find an outlet in passive aggressive behavior. It is very important for those born with Mars here to be careful about the obligations they agree to, and to cultivate patience within them. Likewise, being discriminating about who they bind themselves to will allow them to avoid much suffering.

Mars is debilitated here, and thus useless for most martial operations. Though an image might be drawn to compel a person to unwisely break an agreement, little positive can come from the red planet in this place.

### *Sun in Libra II*

THOSE born with the Sun in this decan have diplomatic dispositions, and seek to come into accord with others. Many are, however, too accommodating, and find themselves in relationships whose terms do not suit them. Some



of the natives suffer silently in these circumstances, while others violate their agreements in secret. Those born with the Sun here desire harmony, but they must be clear about what they expect of others, and with equal clarity understand what will be expected of them. Those that manage this will enjoy many successful unions—romantic, professional and otherwise.

The Sun is badly debilitated in Libra, and thus entirely unsuitable for works of a solar nature. Work can be done while the Sun is in this decan to illuminate a particular relationship, but other powers are necessary to remediate the difficulties exposed.

### *Venus in Libra II*

LADY Venus is strong and fortunate in Libra. Those born with her in this face are able to create agreement where none exists. These natives have a talent for bringing people together through good feeling and pleasant exchange. The ability to create union and accord is, however, based on positive feelings, and may not be sufficient to provide the happy end many of these natives seek. They must learn to endure the rigors of union when pleasure is absent if they are to achieve the pairings they desire. Given time, many do.

Venus is strong in Libra, and works of attraction and glamour will have her potency to thank. Venus' particular facility in this face is to bring people together for the exchange of pleasure or coin. An image of Venus in this face pulls people into relationship, yet whether the pairing will continue is subject to other forces.

### *Mercury in Libra II*

THOSE born with Mercury here often have significant negotiating ability. They favor dialogue in most things, and prefer to arrive at conclusions only after a discussion. Most of them acquire social skills easily, and there is often some organizational ability. However, they may be uncomfortable making decisions that are not arrived at via consensus, and their opinions may be too-strongly influenced by other people's point of view.

In the second face of Libra, Mercury is of sufficient strength for many of the works natural to its sphere. In this decan, Mercury is of particular use for

bringing people into dialogue. The messenger cannot compel agreement, but is effective at opening channels of communication.

### *Moon in Libra II*

THE Moon is uncomfortable in this decan of Libra, for obligations and constraints abound here. Those born with Luna in this face are strongly affected by other's expectations. However, this very sensitivity makes many of them excellent partners in love, for they are wont to desire a lasting and secure union. These natives need to be careful about those that they invest themselves in, and under what terms, for they prone to be taken advantage of.

The Moon is peregrine in Libra, and finds no special dignity in this face. She is thus unable to provide any real benefit to petitioners, and her image should not be graven in any talisman while here.



## LIBRA III: A GYROSCOPE

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IN the first decan of Libra the principle of justice emerged, awakening sleepers and calling the world to account. In the second the focus narrowed to the balance between two people bound by oath and contract. The third face of Libra applies the principle of balance to a thousand small sets of scales, equilibrating movement through a chaotic universe.

The Tarot card given to this decan is the Four of Swords, called by *Book T* "Rest From Strife" and "Truce" by *the Book of Thoth*. The Rider Waite rendition of this card depicts a man within a church, reclining atop a tomb, his hands clasped in prayer. *Book T* states that it signifies "Rest from sorrow; yet after and through it. Peace from and after war. Relaxation of anxiety." Yet how is this "rest from strife" achieved—What occurs beneath the figure's closed eyes?

Dreaming, the reclining man equilibrates his trajectory through multiple worlds, balancing dimensions obscured by the five senses. Upon awakening, he find himself no longer concerned with the mere appearance of balance or beguiled by the promise of eternal harmony. The center of balance

is not a permanent thing, but is instead found in the ever-roving eye of the storm. There is no more naivete here—justice must reconcile itself to an unjust world, and peace to a world riven with conflict. The formula is taken to its inevitable end here, to the point that it appears to contradict itself.

These contradictions are made clear in earlier iterations of this decan. Far from the restraint and repose pictured in the Four of Swords, the figures in the *Picatrix* and in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* are wild and unrestrained. The *Picatrix* pictures “a man upon a donkey, and before him a wolf.” It adds that “this is a face of evil works, sodomites, adultery, of songs, joy, and of taste.” Meanwhile Agrippa pictures “A violent man holding a bow, and before him a naked man, and also another man holding bread in one hand, and a cup of wine in the other.” He states “the signification of these is to show wicked lusts, singings, sports and gluttony.” Far from the carefully moderated scales of Libra’s previous decans, these are images of furious indulgence. They are not dainty pleasures, but extremes of revelry. Violence, gluttony, deviant sexuality and boisterous joy are all pictured here. The capacity of this face for extremes becomes clear only when the violent revelry depicted in the *Picatrix* and the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* is understood to co-exist with the meditative repose of the Four of Swords.

It is only when these images are combined that the true power of this decan emerges. Its secret resides in the eye of the storm, calm and clear as the chaos of desire and fear whirl all about. Yet this is a difficult set of contradictions to bear, and such a balancing act is more easily described than achieved. This formula is a perilous one, for those who attempt it are subject to a whirlwind of contending forces. Its difficulties are akin to those of the tantric path, for the use of extremes to further the Work can easily degrade into mere debauchery. Success requires gyroscopic stability, for the center of balance is always moving, and those who would walk this face must follow the center, however erratic its motion may seem. Evoked properly, this face allows one to see through the eye of the storm.

Yet for all its complexity, the principle of balance is not abandoned here, merely refined and tested. A fragmentary Hellenistic text, *The 36 Airts of the Zodiac*, attributes to this decan the goddess Nemesis. The character of the ancient Greek goddess has little in common with the way her name is used in contemporary English. Nemesis was not an archenemy, but a force which restored balance to life’s chaotic wheel. Her name means “she who distributes what is due” and she was dispatched to afflict those whose crimes had gone

unpunished and to bring low those who had not earned their good fortune. While her work was often of a punitive or avenging character, she also dealt out happiness, taking care that it was neither too frequent, not too excessive.

She is sometimes pictured with and contrasted to Tyche, whom the Romans called Fortuna. Tyche distributed weal and woe unsteadily, and without regard to merit. She was often pictured as carrying a ball to represent fortune's dynamics—unsteady and capable of rolling in any direction. Nemesis was thought to check Tyche's excesses, restoring right proportion. Nemesis thus acted to consciously correct the unjust whirl of blind forces.

The principle of justice or balance is thus applied constantly to a lop-sided world, one interaction at a time. Those who enact this formula successfully emanate an aura of order and are themselves a walking corrective. There is thus a subtlety to the residents of this decan. The image given in *Liber Hermetis* is that of a snake, and the *Yavanajataka* says the that the figure in this decan “engages in the tricks of rogues.”

The dispersed, universal nature of this process is described by those who contend that Jupiter is the proper ruler of this face. Jupiter, lord of feasts and celebrations, lords over the excessive indulgences pictured. Another tradition posits Mercury to be the ruling planet of this face, and the embrace of dualities which characterizes the action of this face supports such a contention. It is important to note that although not the ruler, it is in this face that Saturn encounters the degree of his maximum exaltation, thus linking this face to the lord of structure and karma. The suggestion is that the most perfect structure is not a static fortress, but one capable of pro-active adaptation and dynamic balance.

The power of this face is to equilibrate unbalanced forces as they are encountered, and to maintain connection to the unmoved center. It offers the formulae by which equipoise may be maintained in any circumstance—shelter in any storm.

### *Saturn in Libra III*

THOSE born with Saturn in this face are capable of great discipline, yet they are not moderate nor restrained. If anything, they feel compelled to explore vice as a matter of principle, as well as of pleasure. Contradictions may develop between the native's duties and their indulgences, leading to guilt on

one hand and resentment on the other. Yet with time and proper contemplation, these natives come to understand the principle of duty extends beyond duty, and that of pleasure overflows mere satisfaction. Opposites permeate and mutually interpenetrate one another.

It is in this decan that Saturn finds his degree of ultimate exaltation, the point at which his power is greatest. If possible, operations of a Saturnian nature should be scheduled to take place in this single degree. Otherwise, Saturn is still potent in this decan.

Though of more than sufficient power for all manner of Saturnian works, the greatest here is not practical but contemplative. An initiation into the true mechanics of the created world is made possible here, revealing the manner by which karma chains the whole of being. The laws by which the world operates are a great discovery, and underpin the practice of all successful work.

### *Jupiter in Libra III:*

IMMENSE Jupiter is thought by some to be the ruler of this decan, for it is under his influence that the principle of balance expands to include its opposite. This is a philosophical position, and many of those born under it will share in its nature. They will be expansive, social, sporting and indulgent. There is little they see as not having a place in life, for they come to embrace all that they learn of the human world. All is factored into their careful, but invisible balancing act. These natives not only conduct themselves according to this subtle philosophy, but teach it by their words and actions.

In this decan Jupiter offers the power to equilibrate the life. To call upon the big planet in this place is to ask for the life to be filled with what it lacks. The frivolous will be visited by duty, while the grim will find levity at their doorstep. A talisman properly made and worn will expand the bearer's understanding of necessary equilibrium, and serve as a balancing mechanism for the life, a subtle gyroscope.

### *Mars in Libra III*

THOSE born with Mars in the third decan of Libra strive toward equilibrium in their actions, but are possessed of immoderate passions and intemperate

lusts. These desires may lead them outside of their own ethical code, and the natives may incur the wrath of those they wrong or offend. Mars' red light illuminates the punitive aspects of this face, for these natives tend to draw the furies' wrath themselves, and are themselves capable of great ferocity towards those they judge irredeemable.

Mars is in its detriment in Libra, and thus the works which are given to his sphere are not recommended. The red planet does find some dignity, via its bound, toward the end of this decan. If it is necessary to perform martial operations, one should wait until the red planet occupies these degrees.

### *Sun in Libra III*

THOSE born with the Sun here are stretched across the many polarities this decan encompasses. They are broad minded, charming, and often wise. Nonetheless, many of these natives carry with them an inner tension, for the many conflicting modes which this decan includes de-center the ego and complicate issues of identity. They will not find themselves in their many oscillations, but at the quiet center between them. Those that find this place attain a dynamic stability, a gyroscopic core which few slings and arrows can disrupt.

The Sun is in its detriment in Libra, and has no special dignity in this face. Works of a solar nature are therefore not recommended.

### *Venus in Libra III*

THOSE born with Venus in the third face of Libra have a certain poise, even when in the midst of undignified situations. Their grace is the result of an internal balance. However, when their passions are disordered, they may lose this quality, oscillating wildly and without decorum. Though poise may characterize them, they are generally active pleasure-seekers, willing to indulge in wild romps as well as more sedentary joys. They engage with life's many joys, and are unabashed in their explorations. Though open to many things, they do not generally find it difficult to restrain themselves.

Venus, the ruler of Libra, is quite dignified in this decan, and those works natural to her sphere benefit. Operations to attract pleasing people and things



will be successful. Talismans may be created here which teach the bearer how to engage pleasure without losing one's center.

### *Mercury in Libra III*

THOSE born with Mercury in the third decan of Libra have broad minds and are capable of considering many different perspectives. Their thoughts are complex but their words are diplomatic. Many of them make excellent arbiters and mediators. Their ability to grasp many sides of an issue often lends them a political acumen, as well. Though adept at juggling other people, they may have some difficulty making decisions without input from others.

Mercury is considered, in the triplicity method, the ruler of this face and has sufficient dignity for most works natural to his sphere. A talisman can be made while Mercury is in this face to grant its bearer the ability to navigate conflicting ideas and perspectives with grace and agility. It lends its possessor a greater capacity for sophisticated thoughts and diplomatic words and is a boon for those in political positions.

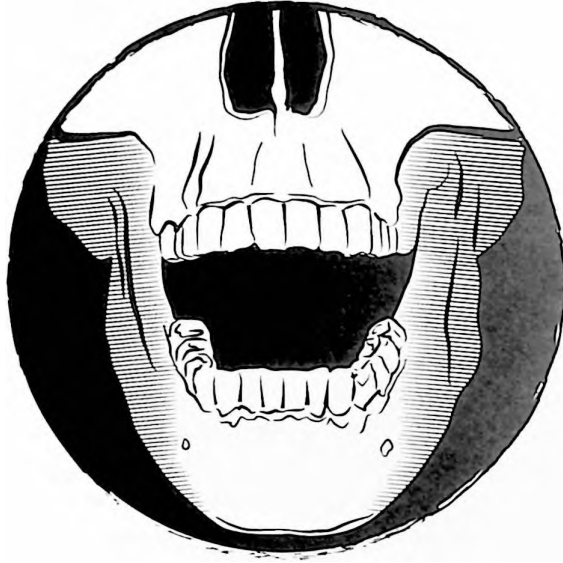
### *Moon in Libra III*

THE MOON is uncomfortable in this decan of Libra, for the adjustments required to navigate its many polarities leave little room for relaxation. These natives are social, and sensitive to other people. They try to reconcile many different sets of needs, wants and perspectives, and may become exhausted from the effort. Their own needs are complex as well, and they may have trouble finding satisfaction. Simplicity is a refuge for them, but they must seek it, for it is unlikely to find them.

The Moon has no dignity in this decan of Libra, robbing most lunar works of efficacy. Luna's image should not be impressed here, for the resulting talisman is likely to cause anxiety and unnecessary complications.

## SCORPIO I: A JAWBONE

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IN the first face of Scorpio hunger awakens. Needs stir and then open a hundred eyes. For this decan Ibn Ezra pictures a beautiful, red bodied woman eating. Her very flesh the color of passion, she satiates her hunger. Ibn Ezra's image is perhaps the most direct of the images given to this decan, for it shows the satisfaction of hunger in the most literal terms.

Yet the simple act of eating conceals the violence which brought the meal to her table. The *Picatrix* is more direct about the violent potentialities of this face, for it pictures a man holding a lance in his right hand and a human head in his left. While Ibn Ezra's image shows the satisfaction of feeding hunger, the lance and severed head of the *Picatrix* show the competition inherent in it. For when many desire the same thing, there will be contention, even violence. The lance, capable of skewering whatever it is pointed at, shows the power necessary to obtain the object of hunger, while the severed head represents the price paid in another's blood.

Agrippa, in his *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, offers an image of two men striking a dignified woman. Though the violence of this scene is unde-

niable, the men's motivations are unclear. Perhaps she is the object of their desire, as well as their ire—the satiated red woman of Ibn Ezra's image. It may be that they intend to rape her, taking the satisfaction by force that she will not grant willingly. Yet perhaps she represents desire Herself, and they strike her in an attempt to destroy her hold over them. A vain attempt, yet one practiced in every time and place.

Libidinally charged images race across this decan, teasing its inhabitants. A fragment of Hellenistic lore, *The 36 Airs of the Zodiac*, sees the Nymphai, the nymphs, cavorting seductively in this face. Daimones tied to the power of hills, fields, meadows, forests and rivers, the number of nymphs is countless. Yet virtually all are represented in Greek art as comely, half-dressed, or entirely nude young women. Though they play a number of roles in their native mythology, nymphs are consistently objects of desire for both gods and mortals. It is thus a safe assumption that it was in this spirit that the nymphs, as an entire class of being, were attributed to this decan of Scorpio.

The Rider Waite tarot offers a very different angle on these scenes of hunger and desire. In that deck, this decan is represented by the Five of Cups, called "Disappointment" in *The Book of Thoth* and "Loss in Pleasure" by Book T. A man, cloaked in black, stares into a river. At his feet sit five cups. Two stand upright, their contents intact, while the other three lay on their sides, spilt.

While the previous images discussed show or imply a red satiation, the Five of Cups gives no evidence of satisfaction. Yet its title, "Disappointment," links it the cycle of hunger which rotates through this face. Did this figure attain the object of his desire, only to find its pleasures fleeting? Or is it the inevitable rebirth of hunger after satisfaction which he finds so bitter? Perhaps he failed to obtain the object of his hunger altogether. All outcomes breed disappointment, for each is part of the cycle which presides here. Hunger cannot be defeated. Yet it can be managed.

The principles of asceticism exist to manage hungers of the mind and body. Though it is not a permanent escape, the fast offers a vacation from the cycle, and it is likely for this reason that fasting is a key component or precursor to rituals of all kinds, for it enables the mind to access the realms of those who do not hunger.

In this decan we are brought to confront the cycle of hungers which are the price and pleasure of incarnate being. The object of desire always skirts the edges of this face while its inhabitants give chase. Some gain the object of

their desire, some fail. All come to know hunger again. Though this may seem a particularly tortured decan, it is merely one which exposes a hard truth. Confronting the cycle, we are less bound to it, and less blind, than if we ignore it. Lashed to a wheel whose revolutions we understand, our movements can be plotted, predicted. With comprehension we cease to become slaves of momentary desires. Herein is revealed the Dharma of Hungry Ghosts and the Tao of Desire.

This image or one like unto it might be graven for the fulfillment of a hunger. Like all magic, though, this image is a contract, and to gain what we desire we must also be willing to pay the price. Therefore the object of hunger, the tool we will use to get it and the price we pay must all be pictured, for this is the true formula of hunger. Sorcery is truth.

This face can also be depicted as part of a ritual fast, for by gazing at the cycle of hunger it is difficult to engage in it unconsciously. It can also be drawn as a method re-engaging, consciously, the cycle as a willing and conscious participant. Denial is mere hypocrisy, and no more moral than buying meat at the supermarket because one finds the slaughter of animals unsightly.

### *Saturn in Scorpio 1:*

SATURN starves in this decan, forcing us to look hunger in its natural face. Delaying gratification and denying desires, old Kronos forces its natives to see hunger most clearly and understand it best. While in satisfaction we quickly forget, in an unfulfilled state the nature of the wheel is quite clear. Those born with Saturn here will have difficulty getting their hungers sated when young, or contrarily, they will be satisfied but with prohibitive consequences. As a result, many develop a strong degree of control over their desires. Some may take their discipline too far, repressing what merely needs to be managed. With time they may learn to accept the cyclical nature of hunger, and to engage their desires strategically.

Saturn is peregrine in the first decan of Scorpio, and thus not recommended for most Saturnian works. In this face, however, Saturn has a special power to bind desires. All manner of hungers may thus be muzzled by operations undertaken here.

### *Jupiter in Scorpio 1*

JUPITER in the first decan of Scorpio grants abundant satisfactions. Many of those born with Jupiter here possess a ravenous appetite not only for pleasure, but for wisdom and learning as well. The majority of these natives prefer to achieve their desires in ways which are of little harm to others. They accept the wheel of hunger with less trepidation than most and strive to play their role as peaceably as they can.

Jupiter is peregrine and without dignity for much of this decan, yet in the later degrees he falls within his bounds. Operations which would ask of Jupiter his bounty should thus be timed so as to locate him in those degrees of this face. Approached through a contemplative rite, Jupiter will reveal the wheel of hunger and satisfaction here, and may offer insight into how one can achieve satiety whilst bringing minimal harm to others. Though Jupiter's benevolence lessens the dangers of this decan, his power to grant objects of desire is unremarkable, and should thus not be anchored in a permanent talisman of any type.

### *Mars in Scorpio 1*

MARS is the natural ruler of this decan in both primary systems, and reinforces all of its strengths and weaknesses. The strength to realize one's hungers is great in those born with red Mars here. In pursuit of their quarry they can be focused and ruthless. They possess the power to attain all manner of desires, yet many pay dearly for their satisfactions. Their task is to learn to calculate the cost of a given desire's realization before they commit themselves to it.

Mars is tremendously strong in this face of Scorpio and all operations of a martial nature will benefit from the red planet's ferocity. Mars' special power here is to cut a pathway to the satisfaction of a hunger or desire. Works of this nature will be extremely effective, yet such work will take the toll natural to the desired course of events. One might impress the image of red Mars in this face onto a permanent talisman, granting both the talents and impediments that the natives experience. A creation such as this will grant one the power to gain much that they desire, but the bearer is sure to find themselves generating unforeseen consequences. Though there is tremendous power here, it

is unwieldy and likely to cause as much harm as good. As with any malefic at the height of its power, great care is advised in crafting permanent talismans.

### *Sun in Scorpio I*

WHEN the Sun shines into the first face of Scorpio, it makes for those fierce and focused in pursuit of their desires, yet prone to ill temper and disappointments. The Sun here brings the native to identify with the cycle of hunger and satisfaction. Their self image is thus often dependent on their power to obtain what they desire. Those of a crude disposition will pursue its rewards and suffer its frustrations with unflagging enthusiasm. Yet those who seek wisdom are also born here. For them the cycle unfolds as a series of lessons on incarnate being, and desire is revealed to be a ceaseless river. Those with insight are not freed from their desires, but they come to understand them, gaining great insight into themselves, and more generally, human psychology as a whole.

In the first face of Scorpio, the Sun is peregrine, lacking essential dignity, and therefore unsuitable for traditionally solar operations. A contemplative rite enacted while the Sun is here will, however, illuminate the desires one identifies with as well as those one consciously rejects. This is an operation for clarity, and provides great psychological benefit. However, the Sun's power here is primarily limited to illumination—it reveals complexes of desire, but has little power to satisfy them.

### *Venus in Scorpio I*

IN this face, Venus exaggerates sexual and romantic desires. Many of those born here are lustful, and crave dangerous intimacy. The depth of their desires makes them difficult to sate, and though they may attend to them constantly, they rarely find lasting satisfaction. They are prone to mistake intense passions for love, and may thus endure in dramatic relationships, even if their nature is largely destructive. They have an ability to draw who and what they desire to them, yet their deep curiosity about the darker shades of passion sees many continually ensnare themselves in disappointing unions. Those with Venus here benefit immensely from taking the time to become conscious of their desires and considering the outcome of pursuing them.



Venus is in her detriment in all of Scorpio, yet she possesses trigonal dignity in the stingered sign as well, providing her with a mixture of ability and difficulty. Her power in this face is sufficient for works of attraction, as well as seductive glammers, for she quite able to arouse the hunger of others. Such works are rarely long lived, though, for hunger ends with every meal.

### *Mercury in Scorpio 1*

MERCURY here provides a cunning intelligence. There is also great and terrible curiosity, for the mind's hunger is stimulated. These natives are generally most curious about people's motives—the desires that drive them. They are capable of tremendous concentration when pursuing a matter which is of interest to them, though they may have difficulty focusing on matters which do not engage their desires.

In the first decan of Scorpio, Mercury finds himself lacking traditional dignity, making operations native to the messenger's sphere difficult to bring to fruition. In this face, though, Mercury does have the power to reveal what others hide, and work done to this end will prove successful if Mercury is not further afflicted. The virtues of Mercury in this face are, however, wholly insufficient to warrant their investiture into a permanent talisman.

### *Moon in Scorpio 1*

THE MOON sees the precise degree of her Fall in this decan, marking it as a place of supremely ill fortune. Here the need to be nurtured both physically and emotionally can easily take on a desperate, ravenous tone. Yet at the bottom there is nowhere to go but up, and those born with the Moon here will learn the truth of hunger better than most. This makes some ruthless and others ashamed. The wise born with the Moon here come to understand the cyclical nature of desire, and become the master of their natures.

In traditional astrology, the Moon is considered to be in a place of terrible affliction in this face. As such, Luna is supremely unsuitable for those works of manifestation generally given to the Lunar sphere. Her power when waxing is to call up terrible hungers and to inspire terrible deeds in pursuit of them. When waning, however, she can aid the petitioner in unraveling the bonds of desire.



## SCORPIO II: AN APPARATUS FOR MUTUAL DISTILLATION

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IN the second face of Scorpio the lonesome hunger pictured in the first fades from view, replaced by images of partners locked in both creative and destructive exchanges. Hunger has found a mate—both mutual satisfaction and mutually assured destruction are sure to follow. This decan coincides with the midpoint between the Equinox and the Solstice. The season is firmly established here and this face is one of the most stubbornly fixed of the entire 36.

This face is represented in the Tarot by the Six of Cups. The Rider Waite rendition of this card pictures a little boy offering a cup full of flowers to a little girl. It is a tender and affectionate image. Both *Book T* and *The Book of Thoth* call this card "Pleasure." There is indeed pleasure here, but its nature is not revealed by the generic title, for there are few faces which do not offer a delight of one type or another. The parties here are children and their affection for each other is natural and unconditioned. The pleasure signified is thus that which accompanies the expression of passion unencumbered by

pretension or decorum. It is a vision of ideal exchange between two parties, poignant and perfect.

The dynamic suggested by the children is identical to the alchemical process of mutual distillation, wherein the matter passes back and forth between one alembic and another, growing increasingly rarefied and potent. The laboratory technique of mutual distillation can be embodied, as well. A whole category of Taoist sexual energy practice, referred to as dual cultivation, involves exactly this exchange between partners. This process combines and distills the sexual energy both parties possess, resulting in a finer nectar than either could produce on their own. Though it is easy to imagine these dynamics between romantic partners, all relationships which rely on trust and continuous exchange generate such circuits.

No matter the context, such exchanges require deep trust, for they involve intimacy, and therefore vulnerability. There can be no dual cultivation without nakedness. This willingness to forsake safety for intimacy is well depicted by Ibn Ezra, who describes "A woman who has left her house; she is naked and has nothing on and she is entering the sea." Not only has she abandoned the protection of her home, she has done so naked.

This face looks upon more than just passionate embraces. The choice to open oneself up, to strip naked and walk into the ocean of another must be carefully made, for trust without wisdom is a sure recipe for pain.

The virtuous circuit of exchange can become vicious in this face. So corrupted, the process of dual cultivation becomes one of mutual degradation, each destroying the quality of the other with each pass. This process can be seen as the mutual distillation of poison, which grows stronger and steadily kills its hosts as it is passed back and forth. This is the cycle of war and enmity, the destructive vortex of argument—the formula for toxic relationship.

This venomous circuit is pictured in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, which describes "A man naked, and a woman naked, and a man sitting on the earth, and before him two dogs biting one another; and their operation is for impudence, deceit, and false dealing, and for to send mischief and strife amongst men." The two dogs tear at each other, becoming weaker with each pass. Meanwhile, it is deceit and false dealing which are the demons which rend trust, deepening the vicious cycle. Though distrust is suggested and savagery depicted, still the naked man and woman are present in this image, reminding us of the potential for affection.

A fragmentary Hellenistic text, *The 36 Aires of the Zodiac*, attributes the

titanness Leto to this face. Though Leto's visage may seem out of keeping with the other images of this decan, her story harmonizes perfectly with it. Leto is the mother of both Apollo, the Sun god and his twin sister Artemis, goddess of the Moon. Leto was not worshipped alone, but always with her celestial children. This relationship between the Sun and Moon, or King and Queen, is the very crux of alchemical operations, for they represent the Spirit and the Body of the matter and are absent in no experiment. The stories of Artemis and Apollo embody both the virtuous and vicious cycles described above. Aiding one another at one time and cruelly sabotaging each other at another, the two were locked in an inescapable partnership, like the Sun and Moon whose powers they represent.

Fixity of relationship is a key characteristic of this decan. Though the examples discussed have so far been of a romantic quality, this decan's capacity to concretize relations extends beyond the erotic. This face concentrates and fixes the passions generally. Those who move through this face also establish fixed relationships with people, places, and areas of study.

Its image can be graven in order to ensure a continuous circuit of benevolent exchange between two entities. An image representing each should be impressed into the format of the picture so that it is specific to each. Conversely, this image may be used to intensify a cycle of corruption, the mutual distillation of gold into lead.

### *Saturn in Scorpio II*

IN the second face of Scorpio, Saturn can deny the fulfilling mutual arrangement as well as cage one in reciprocal arrangements that are difficult to escape. Old Kronos makes it difficult to create such connections, but equally difficult to leave. The natives are thus often hesitant to form intimate relationships with others and equally reticent to withdraw from them. In youth many fall into mutually destructive exchanges with others and learn a hard lesson about trust. With time, though, many of those born with Saturn here come to master these delicate truths, and show great wisdom in their exchanges with people. Their capacity for loyalty becomes of benefit in direct proportion to their discrimination.

In this face, Saturn's power is both to bind people into arrangements and to prohibit their formation. The solidity of Saturn in this decan interrupts the

fluid interplay most natural to this face, and is therefore not suitable for most work, as its power is primarily malefic.

### *Jupiter in Scorpio II*

JUPITER in the second face of Scorpio enables great partnerships for spiritual learning and mutual enrichment. The natives often form meaningful bonds with teachers, and as teachers themselves. They seed virtuous cycles in their relationships and aspire toward generosity in their dealings with those they trust. They may, however, lavish their generosity on those who do not reciprocate fairly, and it is important that they recognize that not all possess the virtue which comes naturally to them.

Considered the ruler of this face by some, Jupiter has the strength to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships in business and between teachers and students. The planet may thus be petitioned to call these into one's life, or to bless those that already exist.

### *Mars in Scorpio II*

MARS is strong in this face, and his power here ensures that the natives will be fierce in any combat. Mars reddens the exchanges which take place in this face, coloring many relationships with competition and conflict. If Mars is unafflicted, these natives will regularly be triumphant in such exchanges, yet they may have difficulty creating trusting and mutually beneficial relationships. Their challenge is to move beyond "winning" and learn to cultivate exchanges where there need be no winner, and no loser.

Mars is fearsome and strong in Scorpio, and this face is no exception. All essentially martial works are strengthened by his presence here, and the image of Mars in this face can be used to gain power over an established rival or foe.

### *Sun in Scorpio II*

IN the descending order method of determining rulership, the Sun is the lord of this face, and provides sufficient spirit to heat the emotional and material exchanges that take place here. Thus without affliction the natives achieve the unions they desire, though they must walk the trials of intimacy and tests of trusts which line this face's tunnel. Though often focused on a romantic partner, their ability to navigate the subtleties of exchange are beneficial in many areas of life, especially business.

The Sun is considered the ruler of this face, and thus serves to unlock the power of this decan. Sol here has the power to bring about mutually satisfying exchanges of all kinds, as well as to invigorate existing relationships. The Saimhain Sun, it is a doorway which opens onto a vision of the ultimate tantra—that of death and life.

### *Venus in Scorpio II*

VENUS has the power to create ouroboric loops of pleasure of here, yet if those operations are not consciously ennobled there will be a tendency for the processes to proceed toward corruption. These natives have a deep desire for intimacy and pleasure, but must learn to show restraint in its pursuit or pain and alienation will be the result. The formula for the dignification of Venus in this place is analogous to the practice of karezza.

Venus finds herself in her detriment throughout the sign of Scorpio, thus making her unsuitable for traditionally Venusian works and complicating the process which this face represents. Works of attraction will not fail utterly, but are instead likely to call to complicated, enmeshed relationships into one's life. Glamours which depend on distance and mystery may, however, be effective.

### *Mercury in Scorpio II*

MERCURY in this face seeks meaningful mental discourse. The desire for mutual distillation is relocated to the mind here, and a type of intellectual tantra is the result. Though such exchanges certainly include discourse with other

people, Mercury's tastes are drier, and these natives often achieve satisfying union with a particular subject of inquiry. Their ability to sustain focus is great once they are engaged. Yet this same capacity can be their downfall, for they are prone to fruitless obsessions.

Mercury's power in this face is to emotionally anchor the mind to a subject. Alternatively, this power can be activated to bond people emotionally through conversation. These bonds are most suited to business or intellectual relationships. Though sufficient to create such connections, Mercury's essential dignity is only by term, and therefore only minimally adequate for most Mercurial works.

### *Moon in Scorpio II*

THE MOON in this decan is desirous of intimate union—to take care of another and to be taken care of in turn. The danger here is in the attempt to bring others into a mutual arrangement without their consent or knowledge, as these natives are often possessed of intense emotional needs. They will struggle with vampiric tendencies, for though they are not evil-hearted, their needs sometimes overwhelm their regard for others. They must invite, not coerce, others to participate, for this is a face of mutuality.

The Moon is in her fall in all of Scorpio, and thus not ideal for lunar works in general, nor for the activation of the powers of this face. Nonetheless, Luna can help to consolidate circles of exchange when waxing, though there are other planets whose power here is more favorable. When waning, her power here is to aid in the dissolution of partnerships, and it is in this role as the devouring mother that she is most natural.





## SCORPIO III: A CROW

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ON the surface, what occurs in this decan appears as a loss. Love is revealed as an illusion, a mere matter of selfish projection. Yet it is not a loss, for the desire, and the capacity for its satisfaction, never truly depended on anyone or anything else. Yet to transform disillusionment into satisfaction, a potent operation is necessary.

The enemies and lovers seen in the second face of Scorpio part ways in the third. This face pictures the alchemical separation of desire from the person or object to which it was formerly attached. Though the lover has gone, desire remains. In a sense, we are returned to the loneliness and hunger of the first face of Scorpio, but with an important difference. The hunger pictured in the first face was moving towards union with its object, while the desire that re-emerges in the third face has known union and now departs from it. It is a place of separation and transformation. Fulfillment comes, but not in the manner first desired.

The Rider Waite tarot card assigned to this decan shows a man, and before him a cloud in which dance visions. In this mist float chalices loaded with



fantastic images. *Book T* calls this card "Illusionary Success," while Crowley, in his *Book of Thoth*, calls the card "Debauchery." Both texts speak of the actions which proceed from being enamored of an illusion, and unwilling to let go of an object of desire. The image of the card clearly suggests a man beholden to his own fantasies. Fantasies are, indeed the proper object of this face's action.

These desires dominate and obsess him. Though in truth he is both their mother and father, he is their plaything here, not vice versa. The same relationship is implied by the image in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, which shows "A man bowed downward upon his knees, and a woman striking him with a staff." The woman beating the man with a staff represents his desires—as in the Seven of Cups, they dominate him. Agrippa goes on to state that it signifies "drunkenness, fornication, wrath, violence, and strife." Controlled by passions, this figure's activity is base, and thoroughly deserving of the title Crowley gives to this decan—"debauchery."

Meanwhile, the *Picatrix* offers another permutation of this dynamic. While the picture is relatively benign—"A horse and a rabbit with it," the description states that it "is a face of evil works and taste, and joining oneself with women by force and with them being unwilling." Here the man attempts to rape his own desire, forcing a satisfaction which would not occur naturally.

This is ultimately a face of wrestling with one's own desire nature, for it leads one inevitably back to confrontation with the nature of desire itself. It is the property of no one else. The floating cloud of fantasies must be recognized as wholly one's own. The formula by which this is accomplished is the separation of desire from all external objects of lust.

It is a matter of the transformation of a desire rather than its immediate gratification in sense-objects. Desire, denied its objects, rebels and tries to dominate the person in which it resides, resulting in the type of unbalanced pleasure seeking described by Agrippa and pictured in the *Picatrix*. But this debauchery is not the proper formula for this face, but a rebellion against it. The process truly described is the dissolution or putrefaction of desires back into their raw, un-structured form—their *prima materia*. The succubus wears crow wings, the *corvus* of the *nigredo*.

This phase can thus be used to return unfulfilled attachments and desires to their beginning. We bury the corpse of past loves and wait for the flowers to grow from their graves. But such dissolutions take time, and the ghosts of desire which haunt this face are real. They are projections of our energy, split

off into quasi-autonomous phantoms. These projections have the capacity to obsess like that of succubi or incubi.

When desire's hungry ghosts have finally been laid to rest, the compost is complete, and a rich loam results. In the grave soil of yesterday's love, anything can grow. This face is thus a formula of liberation, for if we were not capable of laying our desires to rest, returning them to pure energy, we would be enchained forever, prisoners of what we once held dear.

There is a contradictory quality to the action seen in this face, for each desire buried in the grave earth is like a seed, and from it a fresh shoot will inevitably arise. This face thus bears a strong resemblance to Austin Osman Spare's primary sorcerous formula wherein a desire, once fully developed, is released and forgotten. Buried in the soil of the world, it returns to the magician alive and fully enfleshed.

Though rife with heartbreaking and violent images, this face is ultimately one of liberation and great satisfaction. If one chases the ghosts which flit about it, there will be naught but debauchery. If, however, one releases what one no longer possesses, what returns is a satisfaction superior to anything previously dreamt. Those pictured in this face are challenged to wholly possess their own desire-nature, and find complete sovereignty over its continual death and rebirth.

### *Saturn in Scorpio III*

THOSE born with Saturn in this face are bound to confront the masses of fear and desire within themselves. A haunted house waits for the natives to explore. Mysteries lie unsolved within, ghosts to be laid to rest, and demons to exorcise. For some of the natives, these landscapes are purely psychic and portend much inner work, while others may face the horrors of the mind more literally. Those born with Saturn here are drawn inward to confront the difficulty and mystery of what lies in the dark parts of the psyche.

Though peregrine for most of Scorpio's terrain, Saturn's term is located in this face, lending him an essential dignity he lacks in the other decans of Scorpio. Saturn's strength is thus adequate for those operations generally allocated to his sphere. Old Kronos' particular power in this face is to bind unconscious flows of fear and desire. Confrontations with the self can thus be engineered, as can leaden regimes of repression.

### *Jupiter in Scorpio III*

IN the third decan of Scorpio Jupiter grants luck and bravery to its natives, who romp through debauched halls and filthy sewers with nary a stain. In this decan Jupiter shows how to learn and grow from interactions with the underbelly. These natives are often capable of accepting truths about themselves and others that most shrink from. A capacity to walk through sewers without becoming sick is their strength, but it is important that they do not overestimate their abilities, for they are merely blessed, not invulnerable.

Although peregrine in much of Scorpio, Jupiter's bound is placed in this face. Jupiterian work is thus best when in these degrees. Jupiter's particular power in this face is to bless confrontations with the corrupt and potentially toxic. Rites of protection are particularly appropriate.

### *Mars in Scorpio III*

MARS is fearfully strong in all of Scorpio, and this face is no exception. Those born with Mars here have fierce desires and if the position is unimpeded, more than adequate means of meeting them. This power to satiate desires makes Mars in this face problematic, for much of what flows through the tunnels of this face is unprocessed and potentially toxic. These natives may thus have the power to satiate desires which might best be left unpursued. A purification of aims is of the utmost value to those born with the red planet here.

Mars has sufficient strength here for works of a traditionally martial nature. These operations are preferable to those specifically keyed to this face, for it is a decan of desire's death and resurrection, not its ruthless fulfillment.

### *Sun in Scorpio III*

THOSE born with the Sun in this decan are host to a wealth of desires. Naturally transgressive, there is something seductive about many of these natives. Though often magnetic, those born with the Sun here struggle with themselves, for their desires, if unchecked, will lead them astray. They learn to walk the line between control and release within themselves, for if they are without some discipline their debauches will see them putrefy and if they

deny their natures they will be miserable.

The Sun is without essential dignity in this decan of Scorpio, and thus unsuited to work of a solar nature. Though not abounding in uses, the Sun here is ripe for those rites with the purpose of reconnecting to the whole of the desire nature.

### *Venus in Scorpio III*

VENUS is often considered the ruler of this face of Scorpio, for she stirs the great mass of desires found in this face. Those born with Aphrodite here draw to themselves what and who they want, as if by the sticky cords of an invisible spider's web. Yet these attractions are rarely wholly conscious, and much that exists below the threshold of consciousness is dragged into manifestation. These natives thus confront many secrets within themselves, and pull to the surface many secret wishes in others. With wisdom, those born with Venus here learn much about what people conceal from themselves. Living in ignorance, though, these natives will be the victims of their own lack of discretion.

Being the ruler of this decan, Venus has a power here that she does not have in the other faces of Scorpio. Her image can call forth those who can fulfill transgressive desires. Glamours can also be set which glisten with the lure of the forbidden. Alternatively, her potency can be directed to aid in the sacrifice of desires which no longer accord with one's will, releasing the energy trapped within them back into the life system. She can raise pleasures from the underworld, and return them, as well. A talisman might be graven to anchor this intelligence to the bearer, though its proper use will depend on virtues the talisman itself does not grant.

### *Mercury in Scorpio III*

STREAMS of perverse thoughts and strange desires flow through the minds of these natives. They often have a capacity for great psychological depth, for many learn to swim these rivers, following them back to their hidden source. They can find these little waterways in others as well, and thus many of the natives are quite insightful. While their thinking may be intuitive and

incisive at times, it is strongly affected by their emotions, and the quality of their cogitations depends very much on their emotional state. It is difficult for them not to speak inappropriately, and so many give voice to crude sentiments or remain strangely quiet.

Mercury has no essential dignity in Scorpio, nor in this face, and is thus unsuitable for the majority of the works attributed to his sphere.

### *Moon in Scorpio III*

THE Moon in this face of Scorpio is not fortunate, but it does possess unique powers which it extends to its natives. Their roots extend deep, drinking from strange and potentially venomous underworld rivers. These natives feel much of that others refuse to and are open to a range of states which most repress. As a result, they have an emotional range that many lack, and are often quite sensitive, with many evidencing intuitive and psychic ability. Still, emotional stability is often difficult for them to come by. Because they have trouble controlling their internal landscape, many compensate by trying to order their exterior environments.

Luna is considered by some to be the ruler of this decan, for she has a particular power here. Still, she is unfortunate for most purposes, and should be generally avoided if not approached for her specific power here. When the Moon wanes in this face, she can be of assistance in the breakdown of complexes of thought, emotion and energy, returning them to a *prima materia* state. She putrefies and calcinates things to their end, making new beginnings possible.



## SAGITTARIUS I: THE POISONED ARROW

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THIS decan is one of speed. After a time in Scorpio's tunnels, the desire for connection and intimacy have been alternately sated and purged, and the body, soul and mind are now free to move as directed by the will alone. Here the spirit encounters and eliminates resistance at varied levels of reality. The product of this process is the subordination of all layers of being to the will itself. The spirit commands and all parts obey.

In the Rider Waite deck, the first face of Sagittarius is represented by the Eight of Wands, titled "Swiftmess" in both *Book T* and *The Book of Thoth*. The Eight of Wands is unique among the cards given to the decans in the Rider Waite deck in that it is the only one without any representational figures. Only the titular eight wands are pictured, slicing through the card at a diagonal. There is thus a level of abstraction to the speed pictured here. It is the speed of an idea or vision, the velocity of imagination.

Thus in this first decan of Sagittarius a vision erupts. The ideal self, the half divine hero, appears, composed entirely of spirit-fire. To see it is to be moved by it. It is the shape one's spirit takes as it enters the mind. An im-

print. From this image a story unfolds—a quest, a target, a driven myth. The fire that enters the mind enflames it, purging the grosser levels of being as it descends.

In this decan scenes of the swift transport of the body and mind arise. Through its power one is moved in accordance with the vision. Vehicles arise to convey the will—horses and chariots, Seven league and cloud-striding boots and magical horseshoes all appear.

In addition to foot wear and conveyances, the bow and arrow also appear. The bow is the “vehicle” for the arrow, capable of transporting it with violent swiftness toward the target intended. The arrow the body, the will the bow itself. Those seen in this decan move with analogous ardor toward the realization of their goals. Like an arrow or a bullet, none can sway them once they have set their will in motion, though each of their flights must eventually end.

The *Yavanajataka* combines these images in the most straight-forward of the images attributed to this decan—“a man whose bow is drawn and whose speed is as violent as a horses.” The vehicle is mentioned as well, for he is said to have “knowledge of chariots.”

This decan is explicitly associated in *The 36 Airs of the Zodiac* with daimones of plague. Though the attribution of disease spirits seems inappropriate at first, consideration reveals that it speaks to the very heart of this decan’s dynamics.

When one does not direct their own vehicle, one’s vehicle can be commandeered by another spirit. The daimones of plague, now called viruses, are hijackers, who utilize bodies as vectors for the propagation of their own simple, primal will. Without a driving will, all of one’s vehicles are likely to be hijacked. Just as the body is vulnerable, so to are the emotions and the mind. Thus this decan also contains the secrets of propaganda, which infect the psyche.

Mastery of the processes revealed here inoculate one to the pestilences of mind the body and offer the ability to infect others with their spirit. This power has malefic qualities, but there are also a variety of positive spirits one can be infected with—enthusiasm, for example. Those who walk this decan will be the vehicle of various plagues to the degree that they have not attained and accepted a vision of their own true will.

The symbols of this decan; the arrow, the chariot, and the virus are all defined by their capability for movement, but also their potential for violence.



Agrippa's image in the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* attests to this, for he pictures simply a man armored and with a sword, adding that "the operation of this face is for boldness, malice and liberty." The energy patterning of this decan is linear and ruthless. The arrow spares none in its path.

The essence of this decan entails the swift emergence of a motivating vision and the attainment of a vehicle to move one toward the pictured goal. The necessary movement may be of a mental, spiritual or physical nature, and the vehicle must therefore be one suited to the realm.

### *Saturn in Sagittarius 1*

THOSE born with Saturn in the first face of Sagittarius are thoughtful about their opinions, but often dogmatic. Saturn slows down the speed which otherwise characterizes this decan, but the quickness taken is replaced with a more measured and objectively considered viewpoint. The natives may spend their early years uncertain of their perspectives, but as they age and their thinking matures they will become increasingly confident about the way they see the world. The alchemical concretization of the viewpoint which occurs here can in some cases run to excess though, resulting in inflexible thinking.

One of Saturn's powers in this decan is to concretize a particular viewpoint. One can thus bind oneself or someone else to such a worldview, if such a purpose were deemed desirable. Saturn might also be called in this face to retard or obstruct motion in a particular process. The slow planet is not particularly potent or fortunate in this face and it would thus be unwise to construct any permanent talisman of this face while Saturn resides here.

### *Jupiter in Sagittarius 1*

THOSE born with Jupiter in the first face of Sagittarius are lucky. These natives have the good fortune to encounter many opportunities and often the drive to make the most of them. Jupiter's position here also blesses many of its natives with a capacity for spiritual insight. They are often interested in large, difficult to answer questions, and those struggles keep their viewpoints in a perpetual state of growth. Their perspectives thus expanding, with time

many become quite wise.

Considered the ruler of this face by some, Jupiter is certainly potent in this decan. All works which are of an essentially Jovian nature are possible here. Jupiter's particular potency in this face is to promulgate a particular idea—to make it spread and catch like a wildfire. A talisman impressed with this image of Jupiter makes its bearers wise and convincing, though they may develop a degree of spiritual vanity.

### *Mars in Sagittarius I*

IN this fast-moving face, fiery Mars seizes upon opportunities with lightning speed. Those born with Mars in this decan are quick to chase down possibilities. Yet many are too eager, and follow whatever they see move. These natives are also convincing, and often have a talent for argumentation. Many, however, are blind to all but their will—they attempt to force their preferred reality onto circumstances, no matter how ill fitting. These natives have a great capacity to push their agenda, but most will benefit from learning how to pick their battles more carefully.

Mars in this face of Sagittarius grants both ferocity and speed, yet a level of contentiousness makes this energy less useful than it might otherwise be. Mars here can bolster one's courage in disputes and debates, but more often simply kindles conflicts and disagreements. No lasting talisman of this face should be made while Mars is here.

### *Sun in Sagittarius I*

THOSE born while the Sun moved through this face are bold and swift. When they understand the proper course of action in a given situation, they are quick to marshal their resources and move relentlessly toward it. In motion, they are decisive and ruthless, but without a target they are unfocused, even scattered. They are possessed of long term goals—personal journeys which span numerous years. The personal myths which develop around these quests frame the consciousness of these natives. When these quests are either accomplished or abandoned, the natives are unmotivated and may find themselves lethargic or wasting themselves in pleasure. An arrow without a

target is just a fragile stick.

The Sun in the first face of Sagittarius is adequate for many solar purposes. Its special power, however, is to inflame the spirit with enthusiasm and energy toward the accomplishment of a goal. Single rites which partake of this particular formula will be effective. A talisman tied to a particular achievement might also be created, though it should not endure once the intention behind it has been achieved.

### *Venus in Sagittarius I*

THOSE born with Venus in the first face of Sagittarius have an infectious enthusiasm. Their likes and dislikes are contagious, and they are capable of swaying the feelings of others. Many of the natives love tales of quests and journeys, and their aesthetics tend toward the epic and kinetic. Those born with Venus in this face are often effective seductors, and thereby gain the affections of those they seek. Their fondness is for the hunt, though, and they may be less certain of what to do once the chase has ended.

In this face of Sagittarius, Venus offers the ability to fire arrows of short lived passion. Single works can be conducted to enflame people with a given sentiment, though the fires kindled may not burn for long. Such works are most appropriate for a momentary boost of morale or burst of energy directed toward a specific goal.

### *Mercury in Sagittarius I*

MERCURY is generally considered the ruler of this decan, and thus finds a home here. Those born with Mercury in this decan have infectious opinions. They understand how to motivate others, and if Mercury is particularly well placed, may be natural propagandists or salesmen. Their relationship with communication is complicated, for they seek the word and the image which motivates, not the one which conveys a balanced or otherwise objective point of view. They utilize symbols not to reveal an ultimate truth, but to create the unity necessary for the swift accomplishment of a goal. The danger for these natives is that they fall prey to the same half truths which they mobilize for their purposes.

Being the traditional ruler of this decan, Mercury's presence here unlocks the essential formula of this decan. A single rite may be conducted to move oneself and others swiftly toward a given goal, while a permanent talisman can be created in order to graft the powers of this decan on to the bearer. In this face Hermes also grants travelers good fortune, and thus the images of this decan be impressed for speedy and safe journeys.

### *Moon in Sagittarius I*

THOSE born with the Moon in the first face of Sagittarius have a fondness for speed. They tend to have goal-oriented personalities, and even in leisure prefer activity. Yet while they are goal oriented, they are not necessarily action oriented, as many of the quests which these natives find themselves on are intellectual or spiritual in nature. It is very important for these natives to be on one some sort of personally meaningful quest or another. Without the unifying power of a target, the integrity of their personalities breaks down and they become prone to vice. Thus many of these natives will pursue a questionable goal rather than none at all. They must learn to be discerning in which rabbits they choose to chase.

The Moon's time in the first face of Sagittarius can lift fallen spirits, but has little power to impress lasting changes onto reality. When waxing, Luna in this decan can raise morale and enthusiasm, and when waning she can be petitioned to banish impediments to one's will. What can be affected here are small changes, though, and the Moon here is generally unsuitable for lunar works.



## SAGITTARIUS II: THE BRIDLE

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SAGITTARIUS' essential formulae is the unification of disparate elements in order to achieve a goal. This is represented by the centaur, which synthesizes beast and man. In the second face of Sagittarius, the figures struggle to maintain that unity under the assault of contrary forces. Yet the trying circumstances depicted in this face are utterly necessary to produce the force of will required to sustain the conjunctio between body and spirit which is this face's purpose.

The card given to this face in the Rider Waite tarot is the Nine of Wands, called "Great Strength" in *Book T* and merely "Strength" in *The Book of Thoth*. On it a bandaged man stands guard before a grove of wands. His bandages indicate that he has already seen battle, and his body language suggests that he expects further conflict. The strength pictured here is the strength to defend what one has established—the ability to keep the body and mind in line with intention, despite contrary forces. This may seem stressful, but this level of friction is necessary to generate the heat capable of fusing mind and body, vehicle and will. There is no hero without a nemesis.

In contrast, Agrippa, in his *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, shows a woman weeping in a pile of clothes. He goes on to state that this decan concerns sadness and fear for one's body. Meanwhile, the *Picatrix* describes a man leading various animals, and states that he faces "fear, lamentation, mourning, misery, and inquietude." While the Nine of Wands depicts a figure struggling to face assaults, Agrippa and the *Picatrix* describe the results of failing to repel the contrary forces which haunt this decan. Though these are decidedly negative images, skewed toward failure at this decan's tasks, they are nonetheless real possibilities if sufficient strength and control cannot be generated.

*Liber Hermetis* offers the vision of a weasel-faced man standing on a steep, slippery slope. The treacherous footing depicted again points towards the fact that this face is full of difficult terrain, inherently hostile to its travelers. Yet the man has the face of a weasel, a fierce survivor, capable of both stealth and boldness. One of the weasel's distinguishing virtues in the animal kingdom is its efficacy in confrontations with much larger creatures. Not only are weasels capable in defense, but they are also known to hunt animals several times their size. In European lore, it is even said that the mere scent of a weasel could slay the legendary basilisk. While difficult situations are suggested by the slippery slope pictured in *Liber Hermetis*, the weasel faced man has the requisite ferocity and cunning to deal with them.

A fragmentary Hellenistic text makes a strange attribution to this decan—Persephone—the Kore—daughter of the earth goddess Demeter, consort of Hades and queen of the underworld. Persephone is one of the most important figures in Greek myth, with a number of titles and functions. In the context of this face, Persephone's importance is likely due to her role as the mistress of the underworld's terrible forces—Persephone Praxidike—the exacter of justice. Here Persephone was the mistress of the terrible Erinyes (Furies) and Arai (Curses). Indeed, ancient Greek literature is rife with characters calling out to Persephone to bring the Furies against those who have wronged them. The Furies were also strongly associated with punitive Nemesis, who, curiously enough, was said to be able to transform herself into a weasel to pursue her prey.

Those who walk this decan encounter circumstances adversarial to their intentions. In *Liber Hermetis* the figure in this decan is depicted as being on a steep slope and the Nine of Wands pictures a bandaged figure standing in strained defense. The trials which this decan entails are necessary to inflame

the will and provide the heat necessary for the fusion of the mind and body. Thus this decan calls the opposer into being, the adversarial force. Without this satan or nemesis, however, there could be no hero or heroine, no perfect moment.

There is a dignity to the alchemical generation of strength which takes place in this decan. Yet while its fruits are virtuous, they are not moral, for naught guarantees that the great strength generated be put to a noble cause. The figures that result from this process are ruthless, bold and of undivided will, for they have triumphed over their antagonists. Yet it is important for those who reside within this decan to recognize that not all that is contrary to their will should be met with fierce resistance. This face represents a formula for strength in the face of opposition, yet many circumstances do not demand, nor reward, such a response. Those possessed of this decan's formula must also learn when to yield in order to gain mastery.

### *Saturn in Sagittarius II*

THOSE born with Saturn in the second face of Sagittarius will see their resolve tested time and again. In youth, they are likely to have the direction they have chosen challenged by forces they are not equal to. They may surrender, and carry a debilitating shame with them. With maturity, however, comes the ability to stay the course no matter what contrarieties arise. These natives eventually learn endurance, becoming fixed of purpose and unswayed by contention.

Saturn here can bind one to a willed trajectory, no matter what difficulty may arise. Such a rite should not be casually undertaken, though, as such a work will rouse latent contrary forces. Saturn here is unsuitable for a permanent talisman.

### *Jupiter in Sagittarius II*

JUPITER is strong and happy here. Those born with the big planet in this place are treated to the mysteries of the mind and body's intersection. They are capable of unifying themselves in the face of challenges, and are often triumphant. With such wisdom at their disposal, though, many grow arrogant,



and may overestimate their capacity to withstand contrary forces. Though they may be humbled from time to time, they are nonetheless fortunate and often possessed of great insight.

Jupiter is potent in this decan, and is more than sufficient for those operations classically attributed to his sphere. Jupiter's particular power within this face, though, is understanding how the confrontation with the nemesis or adversary is not only necessary for growth but desirable. Jupiter here also teaches how to create unity between the different components of one's being. The image of Jove impressed for this purpose will make a suitable talisman.

### *Mars in Sagittarius II*

CONSIDERED the ruler in the triplicity system, Mars in the second face of Sagittarius makes for determined and independent natives. They struggle to stay true to their will and their beliefs. Sometimes, though, this struggle for personal integrity overshadows whether their beliefs are worth maintaining. Thus while they are able to defend it, they do not always evidence great wisdom in their choice of positions. Their power is to unify mind and body, belief and action, in service to a willed goal. Their challenge is to find worthy causes.

Considered the ruler of this decan by some, Mars unlocks the essential power of this face—the ability to preserve strength and focus. A rite of empowerment while Mars is here will bolster one's ability to stay the course no matter how heady the opposition. A talisman created with Mars in this face will teach its bearer this art over a period of time. The only issue with such a piece is that if the bearer does not seek out sufficient challenges, the talisman may call them.

### *Sun in Sagittarius II*

THOSE born with the Sun in this face of Sagittarius are possessed of tenacity and courage. They have strong beliefs, and the strength to act in accord with them. When possessed of a goal they believe in, they are unswervable, though they do not do well during periods where they are uncertain which

direction to turn. They may therefore cling to patterns long after their timely expiry. Natural crusaders, it is important for them to be selective about the causes to which they devote themselves.

In this face of Sagittarius the Sun's beams unify around a purpose or goal. The power in action here is the ability to center consciousness around a point willed into being. Solar rites may be enacted to strengthen this capacity, and so might talismans be created. Those images impressed with Sol's power at this time will be of unremarkable, yet adequate potency for this purpose.

### *Venus in Sagittarius II*

THOSE born with Venus in the second face of Sagittarius know the passion of the hunt. These romantically adventurous natives tend to fixate on what they desire, focusing their emotional energies on people or objects of desire. The bonds they form subsequent to these conquests are often maintained with equal fervor, for these natives defend what they have acquired. They will willingly face adversity in relationships, and many quite protective of those bonds they have tied. For this reason the choice of partners is of great importance.

Venus has little traditional dignity in the second face of Sagittarius, and is thus not recommended for talismanic work. Nonetheless, a single rite might be enacted to strengthen one's commitment to a given relationship.

### *Mercury in Sagittarius II*

THOSE born with Mercury in this face are capable of great concentration and possessed of strong beliefs. Mercury is, however, in its traditional detriment here. Ideas and beliefs tend to bleed into one another, and there is a general confusion between the intuitive and intellectual faculties. These natives are good at developing and defending an idea, but can be very dogmatic about the positions which they take, many of which are sloppy amalgamations of logic and psychic insight. Strengthening their capacity for analytic thinking and learning to separate their rational and intuitive faculties will prevent these natives from coming to false conclusions.

Mercury is of not much use in the second face of Sagittarius. It lacks the

dignity necessary for the bulk of Mercurial operations and does not have any function in this decan that is not better accomplished by another planet.

### *Moon in Sagittarius II*

THE Moon in the second decan of Sagittarius grants the ability to focus diverse parts of the life around a single goal and to defend that unity when threatened. Those born with Luna here have an innate ability to invest themselves in a single work. Their capacity for movement in the direction they choose to take is thus impressive, for they are capable of unifying their resources in order to accomplish an over-riding purpose. This synthesis-under-fire makes them spectacularly capable of defending their path through life. This same resiliency may also result in a willful and obstinate personality. It is difficult for these natives to admit that they have been moving in the wrong direction, or operating under faulty assumptions, for their power abandons them when they are without a meaningful path or goal.

According to the descending order method, the Moon is the ruler of this face and thus unlocks the essential formula of this face. When the Moon is waxing here and unafflicted, one might conduct rites or inscribe talismans to gain greater powers of concentration and focus. A talisman will aid in the unification of different parts of the life in order to accomplish the will. Such a piece does, however, carry with it the potential for monomania, and its gift of perseverance will fortify the fool's quest as well as the sage's errand.



## SAGITTARIUS III: A HORSE'S SKULL

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WHILE the second decan of Sagittarius pictured heroic unification in the face of adversity, the third shows a necessary separation, and points towards those circumstances in which the vehicle must be sacrificed in order to achieve the will. A horse ridden until collapse, an athlete training to muscle failure. It is unsurprising that we find Saturn named as ruler of this face in most texts. The slow planet's power brings limitations to the surface, and heaps obligation on those whom its rays fall upon. Yet other texts call the Sun the ruler of this face, for rays of will shine fiercely here.

The third face of Sagittarius is represented in the Rider Waite tarot by the Ten of Wands. Called "Oppression" in both *Book T* and *The Book of Thoth*, it pictures a tired man carrying a bundle of ten staves. It is the final card of the numbered Wands, and signifies the difficulties which one must endure to complete an act of will. Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* is in agreement here, as he writes that the signification of this face is for "following our own wills, and obstinacy in them." There is exhaustion here, but satisfaction as well. It is the last mile of the marathon, where sweat and exhaustion

mingle with the taste of victory.

It is unsurprising that *The 36 Airs of the Zodiac*, a Hellenistic fragment, attributes the goddess Ananke to this decan. Ananke, "Necessity," is a primordial power, a goddess of fate present at the birth of the universe. She emerged at the beginning, self-created and entwined with her serpentine consort Khronos, "Time." Together, the two wrapped around the primordial egg of matter and through their constrictions differentiated it into land, sea and air. Ananke is the source of all the world's compulsions, necessities and inevitabilities, and with her consort Khronos, lady of all cycles on heaven and earth. Neither kind nor cruel, Ananke presides over what must be done. Creation itself is her child, composed of her nature and subject to her law.

Those who would walk the terrain of this face must become priests and priestesses of this ancient goddess, for it is here that it becomes clear what must be done. Necessity's trials are two-fold. The first are those ordeals which we choose to take on. To set a goal and to follow it through to the end is sacred to her. Yet not all such initiations are chosen, and these comprise the second category. Life does not always offer choices, and it is at those places where the road narrows that Necessity's trials become clear. We can press on, doing what we must, or abandon the path. These desperate circumstances serve as initiations to mysteries that happier moments leave unrevealed.

Like all of the decans which precede the solstices and equinoxes, there is a sacrifice here. In this case it is the sacrifice of the unified vehicle achieved in the second decan of Sagittarius. This decan pictures exactly those circumstances where the body and the spirit are at odds. To move forward, the spirit, the will, must press the body beyond comfort's boundaries. Many of the tasks which emerge in this face cannot be accomplished by half measures. The work is either completed or it is not. One must press on until success is finally obtained, or find utter failure confirmed.

The hard pathways of this face are thus littered with desperate, brave and heroic acts. The myth which hovers about this face can be intoxicating, and those that breathe its air may impose the ordeal of necessity upon entirely inappropriate circumstances. Those seen in this face may thus imagine situations to be more important than they are, or paint themselves into a corner to invoke its desperate fervor. It is important for those exploring this face's powers and paths not to impose its narrative inappropriately. This decan contains those situations which allow for the triumph of the spirit over all, but these victories take a heavy toll. It is a place of climax, not a domicile in which to

permanently reside.

Those desperate to accomplish their aims are likely to resort to methods which they might usually spurn. The *Picatrix* is unequivocal about the morality of this decan, picturing a man in the act of murdering another, and stating that it “is a face of evil inclinations, of adverse and evil effects and of swiftness in these same things and in evil inclinations, of hostility, dispersion, and of doing evilly.” Agrippa, meanwhile, writes that its signification is “activeness for evil things, contentions, and horrible matters.”

The subject of this decan is what one is willing to sacrifice in order to achieve what one wills. It is thus the formula for the perfection of the will and subjugation of all to it, granting power for both good and evil. Yet those who would apply it must consider the cost of the sacrifice required, for some offerings can be made only once. Those who walk this face must choose which burdens they will bear to the bitter end, and which are not worthy of such feats of will and endurance. The formula of this face is of the greatest value to those who know their true will, and the true works which proceed from it.

### *Saturn in Sagittarius III*

CONSIDERED the ruler of this face by some, Saturn is strong here. Those born with slow Kronos in this decan are compelled to see events through to their end. In youth they may be pulled into furious end-games by others, wherein they learn how to operate under pressure. The environment of this face is oppressive, and often demands much of those who reside here. Yet it also offers lasting satisfactions, for if one can overcome the difficulties which reside within this face there is little that cannot be accomplished. Those with Saturn here become unswervable over time, capable of the self-sacrifice necessary to achieve great works.

As lord of this face, Saturn unlocks the essence of this intense decan. The essential operation is to bind one to the accomplishment of an act of will, no matter what resistance presents itself. Binding oneself to such an absolute end can achieve tremendous results, but may require great sacrifice, as well. Such an operation should be considered carefully. A talisman graven with the image of Saturn in this face will grant its bearer access to deep resolve, though one who carries such a thing should take care to use it selectively, for not all goals warrant such a total commitment.

### *Jupiter in Sagittarius III*

THOSE born with Jupiter in the third face of Sagittarius are privy to the hard wisdom of Necessity. They are able to accept what must come to pass with greater ease and grace than most. Many find the difficult situations which this decan brings to be a source of wisdom and growth. Their positive attitude may be a result of their tendency to happen upon the less harsh permutations of this face. Regardless, they have a talent for bringing things to completion and can accept whatever course of action is deemed necessary.

Though not the lord of this decan, Jupiter is strong and fortunate in Sagittarius, and therefore suitable for those operations native to his sphere. In this face Jupiter helps one recognize and accept what must be and offers a boon to the spirit of those facing difficult circumstances.

### *Mars in Sagittarius III*

MARS in the third decan of Sagittarius grants its natives the courage to do what is necessary. They are fierce in their desire to bring their works to completion, and can be ruthless with both themselves and others to that end. Due to this decan's close association with Ananke, those born with Mars here may be called to step into difficult circumstances, to play the hero a trying situation demands. Many have the capacity to push themselves beyond their limits. This is a gift, but its overuse can make it a liability, as the potential for burn-out is high here.

Mars' time in this decan brings about trials of endurance and tests of the willpower. Its strength may be tapped via a rite of empowerment. However, Mars here is not suitable for permanent talisman, as such an item is likely to draw trying circumstances to the bearer.

### *Sun in Sagittarius III*

THE Sun's time in the third face of Sagittarius sees it approaching the Solstice. Those born within these days have an ability to shoulder heavy burdens and to carry them to completion. More grounded than those born in other faces of Sagittarius, those with the Sun here measure themselves by what



they accomplish, not what they dream of. They are capable of great determination and acts of will if situations demand it. With time many develop a relaxed manner, for they have come to accept that what must be, must be.

In the third face of Sagittarius, the Sun's light shines on what is necessary, and conversely, what is not. Contemplative rites enacted distribute this awareness throughout the life, separating the true burdens from the false. So lit by the Sun, this face illuminates the strength of spirit to accomplish what it must. A talisman so impressed will shine this wisdom where ever it is carried.

### *Venus in Sagittarius III*

THOSE born with Venus in the third face of Sagittarius are possessed of serious passions. Their love leads them into ordeal, for many with Venus here do not come to happiness easily. Romance is a test and trial, an initiation by fire which transforms its participants. They expect much of themselves and others in love, and would tire quickly of simple harmony should they acquire it. There is an epic tone to the passions here which is not always appropriate. Natives should be careful not to hold those with other predilections to the same standards. Love comes easier to many of them as they age.

Venus is unsuitable for most charms and glammers here, for the partnerships they attract will have the dramatic and trying character essential to this decan. Talismanic work is not appropriate, as to wear such a creation will likely create undue difficulty in one's love life.

### *Mercury in Sagittarius III*

PLAYFUL Mercury has a difficult time in this solemn decan. The mind is occupied with necessities, and has little time for pleasing frivolity. Those born with Mercury here may have a tendency toward negative thinking—a proclivity for imagining what they would have to do if a certain situation were to come to pass. The qualities of mind which Mercury augurs here makes the natives well suited to dealing with urgent situations, but may lead them to inappropriately dramatize less dire circumstances. Levity is a great remedy for these natives.

Mercury is in its detriment in Sagittarius and not well received within this

face. It is thus of little magical value here. Work pertaining to the Mercurial sphere should be avoided while the messenger roams this face.

### *Moon in Sagittarius III*

THOSE with the Moon here are determined, but may be depressed or taciturn. They find it difficult not to give their full energy to their tasks, and have a tendency to take things too seriously. As a result, they may suffer from chronic stress and run the risk of burn out. It is important for them to learn to put down some burdens periodically and to refuse others altogether.

The power of the Moon in this decan of Sagittarius may be channeled to fix one's energies to a work or to unbind them, depending on whether Luna waxes or wanes. The Moon here makes a poor talisman, for though it may lend one determination, it will likely stress both the body and psyche.



## CAPRICORN I: A HEADLESS BODY

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THE first face of Capricorn entails the descent of the spirit into the body of the world itself. One sinks into the bones of the world, deeper into materiality than at any point previous. This level of identification with gross matter shocks the perception, and more subtle levels can easily be forgotten in the process. The head is forgotten as consciousness descends. For this decan, *Liber Hermetis* offers us the image of decapitated man, holding his head in his right hand. As the Headless One of the Greek Magical Papyri declares—"I am the headless one, with sight in my feet."

An obscure Greek fragment, *The 36 Airs of the Zodiac*, attributes this decan to Asklepios, the god of healing. To heal the body, we must descend into its full density. We come to inhabit our flesh that we might heal it. Meanwhile, the planetary ruler according to the descending order schema, Jupiter, suggests a descent into the material in order to redeem it. While we descend in Taurus to fructify and in Virgo to perfect, in Capricorn we fall down, down, down in order to rule and redeem.

As consciousness descends to Earth, its details become clear, the advan-

tages and disadvantages of its many realms obvious. The figures which roam this decan can root deeply into what soil they find themselves in, yet for this very reason location is critical.

It is this choice about what territory to lay down roots which dominates the significations of the Two of Pentacles, the Tarot card given to this decan in the Rider Waite deck. It depicts a man juggling two pentacles in the foreground while a ship sails waters in the background. Its title is "Harmonious Change" in *Book T*, and simply "Change" in *The Book of Thoth*. It denotes a change of location and circumstance. The change in location here is analogous to an animal choosing where to build its nest, or a seed taking root in one place or another. It is ultimately a matter of the spirit, floating free, selecting the section of the world in which the drama of its incarnation will take place, and then taking root according to the law of the soil chosen.

Appropriately, this face looks down over a transitional period in the year, for the Sun crosses it between December 22<sup>nd</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Here the majority of the world looks both backward and forward, finished with one year's labors and yet to begin those of the next. In this liminal time people make plans to change their position in the world as they consider new jobs or a relocations. Yet these changes, even when they comes to pass, are but the very beginning, the outermost layer of the process, for one must lay down roots in this new terrain and learn to command the elemental forces which reside there.

The wand with which one commands gross forces is perhaps best represented by the cattle prod, which Ibn Ezra, in his image for this decan, shows a bestial man carrying. The cattle prod is key here, for it is the tool by which we may set in motion the heaviest beasts. A similar symbol is used for the Hindu Lunar mansion Mula which overlaps with part of this decan in sidereal arrangements. The symbol for Mula is an elephant goad. The elephant goad and the cattle prod are mere variations on the same tool—the implement by which we set in motion the grossest of terrestrial forces. Yet it is not enough to merely set the ox or elephant in motion. Steering the great beast requires considerably more art, and it is this art that this face offers.

It is the cattle prod which must be used to drive great forces within the world, such as public opinion, or the direction of an institution. Yet the stubborn, heavy, powerful beast is ultimately a layer of self. The trinitarian drive for food, sex and territory all reside here. These powers all respond to the simple stimuli of the goad, yet the trajectory they take once set in motion is

far more complex.

This decan gives access to deep levels of atavistic consciousness. The mind descends into the natural world with ease, sinking from animalia to vegetalia and then down to mineralia. Yet this descent is only one part of the process. The operation requires one to bring consciousness to these deeper strata and to set those powers in motion, yet one must also use the higher, logic functions to guide them along their course.

Magically, an image of this decan might be properly impressed to attain a new position within the world. A new job, promotion or relocation would be acceptable targets for this type of operation, whose essence is expanding or changing one's territory to gain access to certain resources.

The outlines of these images might also be pondered in order to better understand the laws by which the manifest world operates, and provide suitable basis for the exploration of the mechanics of the body of Cosmos herself. On a smaller scale, this face can help provide access to the genius loci of a particular area or the hive-genius of a human institution or company.

### *Saturn in Capricorn I*

FOR those born while Saturn is in this face, the laws of the land are powerful. Here one faces the constraints of their situation quite clearly. Yet one born here, with Saturn well situated, will gain great knowledge of how the world works, and the advantages and disadvantages of its various locales. When afflicted, the native may evince a pattern wherein they can tolerate no law, and continually relocate in hopes of achieving an ever receding promise of freedom. Nonetheless, with time, many of these natives become like mountain goats, skipping up daunting slopes with ease.

Saturn in this decan may be petitioned for a clear exposition of the laws of a given place, and may also be used to anchor one fully in a given terrain. Work with Saturn in this face also makes clear what sacrifices a given position demands, for rent is not a purely human phenomenon—all places have a price.

### *Jupiter in Capricorn 1*

THOSE natives born with Jupiter in Capricorn have great luck in procuring advantageous changes of position. They are good at reading the various advantages that different positions have, and often possess good judgment in weighing them against each other. They understand how changing circumstance can often change fate. They do, however, tend to rely overmuch on the support of external factors. There is a tendency toward materialism here which must be guarded against.

Considered the ruler of the decan by some, the powers of this face are unmitigated here. An appropriate image may be crafted here in order to facilitate new employment or a change of living situation.

### *Mars in Capricorn 1*

NATIVES with Mars in the first face of Capricorn often have an excellent understanding of the role of terrain and position in warfare. This strategic sense often extends well beyond literal battlefields, though. Resourceful, they understand how to use their environment to their advantage. They are also ambitious, and may be possessed of a restless urge to move to ever higher ground. Avarice and an inability to be satisfied with rewards may thus lead them to sully their own victories.

Mars is exalted in all of Capricorn, and thus more than sufficient for martial works here. When his red light shines through this face, Mars offers the power to sever what binds one to a particular situation, as well as insight into how one's position might turned be to strategic advantage.

### *Sun in Capricorn 1*

THE natives born with the Sun in the first decan of Capricorn are destined to journey deep into the heart of matter, learning much of places, positions, laws and resources. The light of the nous descends here, allowing the native's mind access to deep, heavy strata of being. The hills and the body speak to those who can hear.

THE Sun shines dimly in this decan. Its winter light may, however, serve to illuminate those structures which bind one in a particular place and shine a light onto other options.

### *Venus in Capricorn 1*

THOSE born with Venus in the first face of Capricorn learn to love different parts of the world for their unique features. An appreciation of nature's diverse realms, as well as those wrought by human beings, is found here. Some may be born with an eye for what value each small world holds, what veins of ore and gems run through them. If afflicted, the native will likely fantasize about other places than the one they dwell within. Feelings of depression and a loss of vital energy result when these natives cannot happily indwell their corner of the real.

As a magical formulae, Venus here reveals natural and cultural treasures. It can be used to call forth benefic genus loci and other sleeping forces of fecundity and abundance. A raw animal desire to rut might also be awakened here, in oneself or within a willing other.

### *Mercury in Capricorn 1*

THOSE born with Mercury here are clever in their understanding of the qualities of different places. Hidden virtues possessed by the body of things may be ferreted out. There may be a ponderous quality to the intellect, but these natives are often good at considering the lay of the land ahead of time—they look well before they leap.

The image of Mercury in this face might be painted to better understand the pathways which connect one realm to another. Hermes may also be called to reveal those secrets hidden beneath the soil of the body.

### *Moon in Capricorn 1*

THOSE born with the Moon here have powerful instincts. These primal drives are often strong enough that the person disowns them at a young age. The



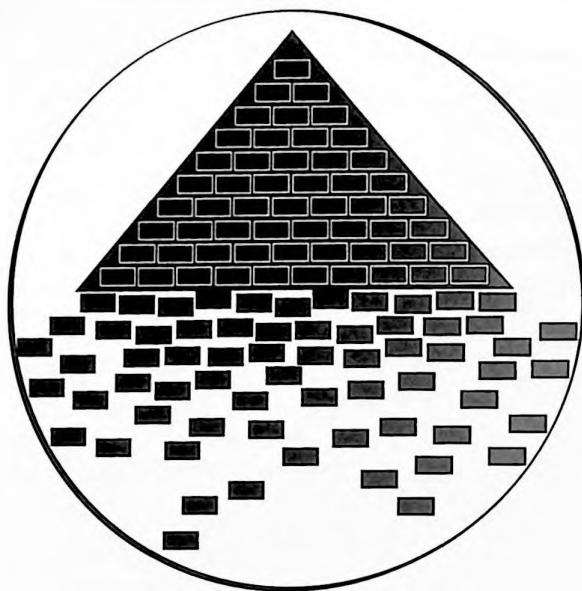
conflict between natural and social laws is experienced strongly, and the native may be someone uncomfortable with their body, or the civilized world, as a result. It is key that they learn to both leash and unleash their natures.

There is not much to recommend the Moon in the first face of Capricorn as a magical formulae. It may assist in temporary workings of an atavistic nature, but its productive use in more permanent talismanic magic is doubtful.



## CAPRICORN II: THE PYRAMID

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WITH the enfleshment of spirit complete in the first face of Capricorn, the ensouled body now looks to shape the world in which it has come to dwell. This face shows visions of what might be wrought upon the earth, blueprints as a type of revelation. From these visions comes the necessity of gathering the resources and power to make the project real, the design manifest. Raw materials and talents are drawn toward the construction of the edifice. The mind, heart and body take on the roles of architect, taskmaster and laborer.

This face is analogous in some ways to the process which the decans of Taurus depict—the fecundation of the land. Yet while Taurus' decans are concerned with bringing forth from the earth its natural abundance, the focus here is on structuring the territory itself. Castles are built, labyrinths of laws and hierarchies. The architecture of civilization takes shape. It is not a green thing, but one of minerals, stone and bones.

The highly structured nature of this face is evident in the Tarot card allotted to it—the Three of Pentacles. It pictures three men inside a cathedral. Two of the men hold a blueprint inquiringly toward a third, which *The Picto-*

*rial Key of the Tarot* tells us is the sculptor. Called "Material Works" in *Book T* and merely "Works" in *The Book of Thoth*, this card contains the essential formula of this face—the laborious restructuring of the manifest world according to a deliberate plan, or blueprint. For this phase of creation to proceed according to plan, laws must be carved and discipline enforced. The project, the vision, thus creates laws of action necessary for its proper realization. It is thus a face of discipline, for cathedrals, like the one pictured in the Three of Pentacles, are works whose construction spans entire decades.

The emphasis on building is pictured clearly in the *Yavanajataka*, which describes "a man of blazing splendor" girt with armor and sword, who "wanders about constructing river embankments, tanks and aqueducts." His martial nature is clear, for he does not merely imagine the construction of things, but actively manifests them. He is architect, foreman and laborer. Yet the works which emerge in this face are not solo projects. Instead, they require that many people's energy be harnessed to a great plan.

This face is thus both a spur to action and a binding. While many bindings take the form of a forbiddance, the one which takes place here is instead a compulsion to act in accordance with the blueprint. This decan binds one, or many, to the accomplishment of a daunting task. Yet one must be careful tying oneself to great works, for such a decision has enduring consequences.

While history remembers those whose greatest works endure, it conceals the thousands who did not achieve their aim. Many of the projects dreamt of within this decan are not possible. The *Picatrix* states that "And this is a face of seeking matters which can in no way be." Agrippa adds in his *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* that it is a face of "requiring of those things which cannot be done, and for the searching after those things which cannot be known." An ambitious imagination is not enough. It is thus key to dream the possible.

Thus in this decan appear impossible or ill fated projects, the epitome being the Tower of Babel, which sought to reach the heavens itself. It is a child of hubris, for the heavens cannot be pierced by a tower, and money cannot buy wisdom. Yet ambition and hubris are not easily separated. The two often appear together, and without ambition there is no grand blueprint nor the energy to execute it. Ambition must be distilled from hubris over and over again to achieve purity of purpose.

Ambition is necessary to achieve the plan one imagines, but so is health of body and mind. It is thus unsurprising to find the ancient Greek goddess

Hygeia attributed to this decan in *The 36 Airs of the Zodiac*. Hygeia, from whose name we derive the word “hygiene,” ruled over the proper maintenance of bodily and mental health. Though the focus of this face is not primarily health, such strength is absolutely critical for success in the daunting tasks proposed here.

### *Saturn In Capricorn II*

THOSE born with Saturn in the second face of Capricorn are often compelled by forces within their lives to participate in the creation of great works and the maintenance of institutions. When they are younger they may take menial roles, but in many natives the desire to bring grand works into being will be strong. They must face their fear of failure, for many born with this position will have an exaggerated sense of the challenges entailed. Though their responsibility and ambition weigh heavy on these natives, they are less afflicted by hubris than those with other planets in this decan.

Saturn’s leaden rays fall heavy here, and the slow planet’s power is more than sufficient for the works allotted to his sphere. Saturn, in particular, quickens powers of organization in this decan. The image of this face may be used to bind a group to the completion of an ambitious construction.

### *Jupiter in Capricorn II*

JUPITER is ill placed in the second decan of Capricorn. The planet’s expansive quality provides a stark contrast to the discipline necessary in this decan and inflames the tendency toward hubris which this decan presents. The native must be ruthless with their own ambitions, as there is a strong tendency to commit to much grander plans than one can execute. There is, however, some organizational talent, and an innate understanding of how to move through hierarchies.

Jupiter, fallen in Capricorn, is unsuitable for the majority of Jovian work in this decan. Indeed, Jupiter’s power in this face is primarily malefic, as it serves primarily to encourage unrealistic ambitions and hubristic visions.

### *Mars in Capricorn II*

MARS in this decan is a mark of potency. Those born with the red planet here often exhibit a quiet but profound ability to marshal their energies towards great accomplishments. These natives are often not actively intimidating, but are rarely bested in conflicts. They are naturally strategic and able to delay ego gratification until after a given task is accomplished, or opponent defeated. Though they tend to be quite effective, they too are prone to the arrogance which haunts this decan.

Mars' presence in this face energizes its core significations. Accordingly, its natural powers become easy to activate. Binding one's energies toward a great task is the primary operation here, though a more permanent image might be impressed to aid in the cultivation of these qualities within one's character. The power of this face can also be turned toward aggressive ends by binding others to impossible tasks, or compelling another's participation and labor.

### *Sun in Capricorn II*

THE Sun in the second face of Capricorn, unafflicted, indicates a hardworking and ambitious character. The natives tend to see themselves as essential to the accomplishment of great endeavors, and indeed, many are. There is, nonetheless, often a toilsome and unsatisfied character to the native's experiences, and they may long for release from ambition and labor. Thusly, though normally disciplined and pragmatic, many have a shadow which is anarchic and pleasure-hungry.

This face, when illuminated by the Sun, casts ample light on the great plans of both oneself and others. It might be contemplated to reveal the designs of others, or to come to clear knowledge of the heart's ambitions.

### *Venus in Capricorn II*

THE hearts of those born with Venus in this face of Capricorn are open to the majesties of ambitious designs, and they look with pleasure upon grand plans conceived and executed. The artistically inclined among these natives

are often able to imagine and execute intricate designs. There is also an organizational ability, for many understand how to unite people's passions around a shared aim. In love, many favor ambitious partners.

The image of this face might be painted or otherwise impressed upon a suitable medium to evoke an inspiration of wonderful artistic patterns. Venus' connective powers could also be called upon here in order to help unite the hearts of many in a grand scheme.

### *Mercury in Capricorn II*

THOSE born with Mercury in the second face of Capricorn are often plotters. Their minds tend towards organization, and when they possess a goal they are excellent at working towards it, step by step. This capacity for organization often extends to others, with many natives having good management skills. There is a difficulty here, for though the mind churns with ideas and ambitions, these may change regularly enough that few are brought to fruition.

The image of this face might be used to communicate a particular plan or design—to impress it onto the minds of those concerned. Mercury can also be called here for organizational assistance, for example, to break an intimidating project down into discrete roles.

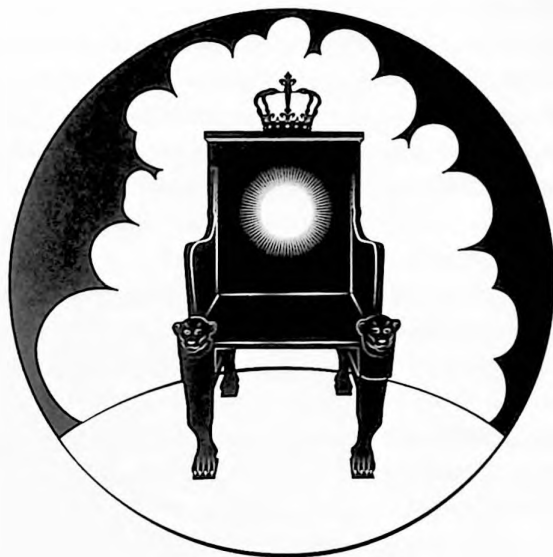
### *Moon in Capricorn II*

THE tender Moon encounters difficulty in the hard second decan of Capricorn. The ambition and labor that occurs within this face requires a toughness of body and soul, denying the sensitive Moon comfort and nourishment. Nonetheless, the natives learn to plant their roots in the hard and dry soil and draw sustenance from the satisfaction of works achieved. The Moon here provides for toughness of character, but the development of empathy and the ability to nourish the self and others is often impeded.

There is generally little benefit to activating the Moon when in this decan, for she brings hardship. One might petition Luna here with the intention of entering into or creating an ordeal, but the Moon's position here is otherwise largely without merit.

## CAPRICORN III: THE THRONE

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THE great construction undertaken in the second face succeeds and upon this edifice do the mighty figures native to the third face sit, holding court atop thrones of power. Here we see the apex of matter's many mountains. Their struggle is not to build, but to administer to the world. Considered a solar decan by some, regents abound. This is the place of the religious leader, the CEO and the King.

The dynamic seen in this face is the struggle for control between an individual and their world. In the Rider Waite vision of this face, a giant man sits atop a city. His environment is his throne. Called "Earthly Power" by *Book T* and "Power" in *The Book of Thoth*, the card represents a position of mastery over one's environment, being ensconced in a place where one can order and regulate their portion of the world. This theme is quite clearly seen in the planet which is most commonly assigned it—the sovereign Sun. Sol shines steadily, subjecting the world, cyclically, to his radiant mandate.

With this investiture of power also come difficult choices, for the world's condition depends upon its regent's decree. In the triplicity system, this de-



can is considered ruled by Mercury, for the executive position of consciousness this decan requires entails the collection and processing of information, as well as careful deliberation and decision making.

Though Mercury is most often associated with the intellect and the powers of communication, the swift planet has also long been associated with the practice of commerce. Indeed, the word “merchant” is itself derived from Mercury’s name. Several sources attest to the power of this face to accumulate great sums of money. In fact, Agrippa, in his *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, pictures a “banker gathering his money together on a table” and mentions that this is a face of “covetousness of money.”

Though not formally attributed to this decan, it is important to note that it is within its span of degrees that Mars’ single degree of maximum exaltation occurs. Though not over-martial in bearing, those planets which find themselves in this decan’s throne are potent indeed, capable of great good and terrible evil.

Yet one need simply flip the image of the king atop the throne for it all to come crashing down on the man, burying him in an avalanche of matter. Only high places bring with them the danger of terrible falls. The great pile of matter which one rests upon may end up crushing them. Thus, in this face we see an aspect of the relationship between the created world and the spirit illustrated. The question is therefore whether one is in control of their position, or whether the position itself mandates their movements. Is the great building a palace or a prison?

Stories are told here, tales of the struggle to attain great position in the created world. The spirit wrestles with matter’s arrangement, striving to shape it. Yet no throne offers power without responsibility. Each position, no matter how lofty, comes with its own expectations and obligations. The ambitious residents of this decan may be surprised when they attain the power they desire, to find that the price of that power is freedom. For others, the cost is less surprising. The mountain tops upon which this face places its seats are forbidding, for the climb is arduous and the arrival cold and often lonely.

The power of this face is to draw one close to high seats of power. The attention of people of influence can be gained, as might a throne of one’s own. Yet the positions always come with responsibility, and to sit in them is to be tempted by hubris.

### *Saturn in Capricorn III*

SATURN is very powerful here. The cost of the obligations which come with rulership do not go unseen by these natives. The price of power is clear, as is the pressure which comes from placing oneself at the center of a system. Some natives will thus avoid positions of responsibility because they understand their nature, though many will find themselves forced into various thrones. Many of these natives will experience a sort of "weight training" as they learn to bear the weight of increasingly heavy mantles of power and responsibility.

Saturn is strong in all of Capricorn, and thus fit for the range of operations which are natural to his sphere. A fitting image of this face might be impressed to gain greater power and responsibility within a given world. Though desirable positions may be attained, the price will not be inconsiderable. A wise form of this operation might take the form of a contract, wherein one signifies that they understand and accept the inherent burdens.

### *Jupiter in Capricorn III*

THOSE born with Jupiter here are likely to attain posts of power through good fortune rather than intention and labor, and thus be less likely appreciate the gravity of their responsibilities. They are also likely to underestimate the constraints which seats of power place upon their occupants. Nonetheless, the wise among them take pains to appreciate the opportunities granted unto them, and strive to understand their responsibilities.

Although not fit for the majority of Jovian work, images of Jupiter in this decan might be inscribed to gain a blessing from the occupant in a throne above one. Favors from bosses or those directly superior in a hierarchy may thus be called down.

### *Mars in Capricorn III*

IT is in this decan that Mars' traditional degree of exaltation, or maximum potency, occurs. Mars is thus, as in all of the decans of Capricorn, quite powerful. Those born with the red planet in this face understand an essential

truth of combat and conflict—that one who attacks from the more advantageous position is likely to be the victor. As such, these natives are unlikely to evidence typically martial behavior. Their approach to conflict tends to be patient, and only to act when victory is assured. In the face of the Throne, it is unsurprising to see that many of these natives rely on established power structures to fight their battles for them. The point is not glory for these natives, but victory. They are wise in works of self-assertion, but may conceal a problematic arrogance.

Images of Mars in this face can be used to mobilize established powers on one's behalf. The genius loci of a region, or police forces can be drawn to aid the bearer. This face might also be impressed in order to better understand the laws of combat and the principles which guide those that prevail.

### *Sun in Capricorn III*

THE Sun is considered to be the ruler of this face by many authorities. Here we see the solar king seated on the throne of matter. The natives of this position are born to command their environment, and tend to be both far sighted and resourceful. If the solar position is afflicted, however, the natives will not take responsibility for the affairs of their kingdom, and may feel impotent beneath its weight. Those born into this face are brought to glory by taking total responsibility for their realm, for they are the natural stewards of one fief or another.

An image of this face might be impressed in order to gain the throne which one is natively entitled to. For each star hath its own kingdom, though it may be long in exile from it.

### *Venus in Capricorn III*

IN this place Venus is enthroned—or desires to be. Those born with this placement will, if unafflicted, gain the love of the lords of the earth. They will do so through their great appreciation for the qualities necessary for lordship. In more debased forms, they may simply love power. It is critical for those born with the lady of the heavens in this position to acknowledge their affection for the heights, for many conceal their ambition with guilt and

shame, rendering them powerless.

An image of this face is of great use in drawing the favor and affection of those seated on thrones of power. Conversely, one placed on such a throne might impress an image of Venus in this face to understand how to fructify their realm and gain the favor of those who reside within it.

### *Mercury in Capricorn III*

MERCURY is thought by some to be the proper ruler of this decan. Here Mercury shows the native the many clever things which can be done from a perch of authority. Intelligence in real estate, banking, and the other arts of the powerful can be comprehended here. The natives also have a certain authoritative manner to their communications, and expressions of arrogance and inflexibility may result. Nonetheless, many of those born with Mercury here show good judgment, and considerable potential as ministers.

Though not useful for most of the operations allotted to the sphere of Mercury, an image of this face may help gaining the ear of those in power. A graven image of this face will yield insight into the arts of the powerful—organization, commerce and the acquisition of land.

### *Moon in Capricorn III*

THE Moon presents difficulties to those born with her in this face. The Moon here makes for natives emotionally beholden to power structures. They are responsible, but often to their own detriment, and many are thrust into burdensome positions too early in life. So beholden, they may ignore their own needs in light of the demands their position makes upon them.

There is little to recommend a talisman of the Moon in this face, though one seeking to become the vassal or consort of a powerful man or woman might impress the Moon waxing in this face upon silver to bring about just such an outcome.



## AQUARIUS I: THE MARK OF EXILE

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IN the first face of Aquarius the spirit steps down from the throne of power glimpsed in the third decan of Capricorn. The protective but oppressive shell of the world-system is abandoned in favor of the promise of what might lie beyond. The figures seen here thus bear the mark of the eccentric, exile, the rebel, and the pioneer.

This is a face of exclusion and intentional exile. Many of the traditional images associated with this decan depict the difficulties of living on the margins, the outside. The *Picatrix* states, rather unequivocally, that “this is a face of misery, poverty, and of a slave who deals with crumbs.” Later, Agrippa, in his *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, writes that they labor “in poverty and baseness.” Poverty and labor are both circumstances overseen by Saturn, who is not only the traditional ruler of all of Aquarius, but held to be the ruler of this face in the triplicity system.

Yet these figures are not defined solely by their toil. There are discoveries to be made and profit to be had on the periphery. Agrippa writes that this decan entails “thought and labor for gain,” while Ibn Ezra pictures a dark

skinned coppersmith, whose labor results in both beauty and financial reward. Yet it is important to note that he is a coppersmith and not a goldsmith. A copper smith may create beauty, but his wares will not command what a gold smith's will.

It is important to note that the images discussed so far includes a direct reference to Venus, who is considered to be the ruler of this face in one of the two primary systems. The smith in Ibn Ezra works copper, the metal traditionally given to Venus, while the man in *Picatrix* appears with a peacock, whose splendor has been long associated with the planet. Meanwhile the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* describe a woman spinning yarn, another traditionally Venusian activity.

Though not dressed in the regalia of kings nor in the finery of nobles, the figures labor creatively and independently. Though they may toil, there is an independence in this decan which is not represented in this trio of images, for all of them hail from feudal worlds, where the consequences for breaking with the mainstream of society was far worse than in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In a modern context, there are a number of rewards for breaking with the herd, not the least of which is the joy of personal freedom, a pleasure attested to by Venus' rulership of this Decan.

For some, the exile from the standard reality system may be forced, but for others it is an intentional exodus, even a liberation. While the material circumstances that come with such choices are rarely luxurious, the spiritual benefits can be great. To gain a wider and deeper understanding of reality one must inevitably break with the orthodoxies of their time and accept the mark of the heretic. The 4<sup>th</sup> century CE *Yavanajataka* describes a pitiless, sharp-toothed man the color of a dark cloud, garbed in antelope skin and having dirty hair. He "knows how to practice magic" and has "the nature of one who is not insignificant." Here we have not a political or financial outsider, but a spiritual outsider, self-exiled from a civilization whose rules constrain his arte. Though alien and forbidding, his dignity and power are evident.

The Tarot card given to this face in the Golden Dawn system, the Five of Swords, offers a very different angle. The Rider Waite Tarot pictures a bold man smirking and holding three swords as two defeated rivals slink away, their blades on the ground. Called "Defeat," it is a complicated card. Book T and Crowley in his *Book of Thoth* ascribe dire meanings to this card, the first and foremost of them a literal defeat, and the triumph of baseness and "vileness of nature." When the exile looks back upon the masses he has left be-

hind, it may well be the triumph of the vile and base that they see. *Book T* also specifically notes the power of this decan to sever and destroy relationships, and although a bit hyperbolic, this points toward the abandonments which are inherent in the dynamic of exile. Whether one goes into exile in order to seek riches, for freedom or because they were banished, relationships are always sacrificed, though others may come to replace them.

An fragmentary text from the Hellenistic era, *The 36 Airs Of the Zodiac*, ascribes the goddess Dike, “Justice” to this decan. Although Dike may seem more appropriate in one of the decans of Libra, her presence in this face is entirely fitting, for at its core is the abandonment of relationships which do not live up to Lady Justice’s high standards. While the need to escape unjust systems is a key motivation in this decan, the desire for personal freedom is just as strong. The Roman *Libertas*, the goddess of liberty, is therefore just as appropriate here as her half-sister Dike.

In this face we gather what we can from outside the norm. The frontier of any reality system is hard—there is a reason it extends no further. Though exile from the core always comes with hardship, there are material, intellectual and spiritual riches on the frontier, but to seek them requires a break with the known. As a spiritual tool, this decan points towards what one gains from stepping outside of the self. Herein is the sweetness and peace which exists above the muddy tumult of life—the satellite’s view of the world is always beautiful, no matter how hellish the situation below.

### *Saturn in Aquarius I*

CONSIDERED the ruler of this face in the triplicity system, Saturn is indeed potent here. While other planets placed here may invite one to leave the herd behind, Saturn rarely offers its natives a choice. In youth they come to know what it is to be on the outside, looking in. From their vantage outside, however, they come to understand how systems operate better than those entombed within them. So positioned, many develop an innovative perspective. Often these natives also learn to live by rules more universal and profound than those commonly held by their culture. There is a capacity for splendid isolation with Saturn here, the power to detach from what is not useful or true.

Cold Saturn detaches and isolates in the first face of Aquarius. Saturn is



of exceeding potency here, and thus gives his icy blessing to all manner of Saturnine works. Wardings which deny access or repel are the specialty of Saturn in this face. Rites of liberation/exile can be enacted here to sever the bonds which anchor one to entire reality systems. A malefic by nature, it is important to work carefully with Saturn when he is so strong. As with the slow planet's metal, lead, overexposure is quite toxic.

### *Jupiter in Aquarius I*

GENTLE Jupiter journeys to the frontiers of the world in this face of Aquarius. Those born with the big planet in this decan travel naturally and easily outside of conventional thinking. They go in search of neglected wisdom, and often find it, becoming students of unusual spiritual traditions or the occult sciences. There is often something experimental and unorthodox about their perspectives, which are often highly idiosyncratic. Though these natives discover much that many miss, they may fail to appreciate more conventional truths.

Jupiter brings unorthodox benefits in this face, showing a particular magnetism for unusual spiritual material. An image of Jove in this face will bring teachings and teachers. It can also be mobilized to bless the spread of an unconventional perspective. Jupiter's power is abstract in this face, though, and works conducted for concrete, material ends will tend to meet with mediocre results.

### *Mars in Aquarius I*

RUST-RED Mars is ill-suited to this face of Aquarius. These natives are rebellious, and many will go to great lengths to protect what they see as their freedom. They are often isolated, and may find themselves persecuted, or driven out. Those born with Mars can find power in their place apart from others, but the alienation that tends to afflict these natives breeds hostility within them. The proper amount of isolation makes for a maverick, while an excess merely breeds resentment.

Mars is peregrine in this decan of Aquarius, and has little strength to do good. A personal talisman of Mars in this face is sure to draw hostility to

the bearer and will accomplish little of value. Some unpleasantness might be loosed upon another from this face, but even for malefic purposes Mars in this decan is of limited use.

### *Sun in Aquarius I*

WHAT light the pale Sun sheds in this decan falls upon the rewards of breaking from the great herd. Originality and freedom abound in these natives. They are always pulled to frontier, to discover what stands outside the known. They need the freedom to innovate and room to explore what others have neglected. Because of this they often identify as outsiders even if they are not widely perceived as such.

THE Sun's power in the first face of Aquarius is to shine light upon what stands outside of the known world. Some illumination can be gained in these matters, but Sol is weak in this decanate, and unsuitable for traditionally solar works of empowerment.

### *Venus in Aquarius I*

VENUS, thought by some to rule this face, is oddly strong here. The obscure value of what is disregarded by others shines, drawing these natives to go in search of ignored treasure. Those born with Venus in the face are drawn to those outside the mainstream of society, both the unappreciated geniuses and bizarre failures. Their aesthetics are usually eclectic, and there is often something chimerical about their creations. Many gladly sacrifice security for freedom, for in choice and experiment they find beauty.

In this face Venus exerts a strange magnetism, drawing odd treasures, offbeat luxuries and unusual persons. Operations to attract these things will be successful, as will glammers which aim to wrap one in the charming veils of the exotic and transgressive. A talisman well made will accomplish both of these effects for its bearer, though by positioning oneself to receive the treasures of the outsider, one may be deprived of more conventional rewards.

### *Mercury in Aquarius 1*

MERCURY has some strength in this face. The natives are possessed of eclectic and inventive minds and have an ability to connect the unusual with the usual, the strange and mundane. Their thinking is often peppered with obscure concepts. They are curious and attracted to techniques and ideas not in common practice. The great among them are explorers and cartographers, mapping spaces unknown for their fellows.

In the first face of Aquarius Mercury can be called upon to complete many of those tasks which are natural to his sphere. Though capable, there is little special benefit to the messenger's time in this face.

### *Moon in Aquarius 1*

IN the first face of Aquarius, the Moon is like an exile or rebel within her own land. The natives often feel out of place in the lands from which they hale, and are thus prone to go in search of a truer home. Even far from their place of origin, these natives carry with them a certain detachment from the circumstances they find themselves in. With time, though, alienation can become independence. They have a great need for freedom, and do poorly when placed in circumstances where they lack choices. They are idealistic and principled, sometimes to their own detriment. Some natives here may try to sustain themselves on an austere diet of beauty and freedom. Ideals, however, make a poor bread, and these natives must learn to compromise in order to get their needs met.

Luna experiences difficulty in this decan—the idealistic nature of the face runs contrary to the concrete needs the Moon oversees. The Moon here is thus not appropriate for works of a lunar nature, for it is the power of this face to isolate. Its removes the babe from the bottle, the root from the earth.



## AQUARIUS II: HEAVEN AND EARTH

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WHILE the first decan of Aquarius pictures rebellion against established order and the exploration of what lies outside it, the second builds bridges between the exile and the citizen, beggars and kings, heaven and earth, inside and out. Its wise and independent inhabitants ply the rivers between established kingdoms, charting liminal spaces.

The space between is very much the subject of the Tarot card given to this face in the Rider Waite deck, the Six of Swords, which pictures a man ferrying a woman and child across a river. *Book T* calls this card "Earned Success," while Crowley, in *The Book of Thoth*, refers to it as "Science." The ferryman is the master of the space between worlds, for the crossing itself his realm. The ability to touch multiple shores but be beholden to none is the key to this face. Crowley calls this card "Science" in his Thoth deck, for it is only the method of science which can consistently connect the shore of the known with that of the unknown.

This mastery of the space between one shore and another brings with it certain benefits, for it is the nature of commerce to benefit from the trans-

port of goods from one place to another and back again. Through the method of science and the art of the ferryman, markets emerge, and those who walk this decan may be well rewarded for their crossings. Indeed, Ibn Ezra saw in this face a bearded man possessed of purses "that contain precious stones and gold." The lord of this face in both primary systems is Mercury, whose patronage of commerce underlies the word, "merchant." The figures which reside in this decan do not merely bridge the known and the unknown, but the ideal and the practical as well.

A principled but fierce wisdom is suggested by many of the images attributed to this decan. Though many contain the outsider qualities seen in the pictures of the other faces of Aquarius, those given to this face suggest a sovereignty not pictured elsewhere. Ibn Ezra describes a long bearded man possessed of precious stones and gold, and Agrippa also describes a man with a long beard. The *Picatrix* makes no mention of a beard, but pictures a man like unto a king. These dignified figures represent success in this labor's central task—the establishment of independence between multiple worlds. Their wisdom results from knowledge of both shores and they are enthroned by the fact that they are beholden to neither. The figures here are kings, but of the spaces in between claimed territories.

Once again we see Mercury as ruler of this decan, for the swift planet's sacred space is every road but no place. Mercury is lord of dualities and the space between them. Unlike the other decans which emphasize dualities, this one, being the middle decan of a fixed sign, is unusually fixed, and stabilizes commerce between heaven and earth.

Yet there is a foreign-ness to the untamed spaces between, and something alien about those that dwell within them. Though the figures described by Ibn Ezra, Agrippa and the *Picatrix* are formidable, the one depicted in the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE *Yavanajataka* is terrifying. The text describes a man the color of clouds at sunset with protruding teeth, armed and armored, garlanded with skulls and draped with nooses. In this forbidding image we see the fear that people have of what lies outside their small worlds.

The *Yavanajataka* is not the only text that saw in the second decan of Aquarius an image of terror. A fragmentary Hellenistic text, *The 36 Airs Of The Zodiac*, attributes Phobos, "Fear," to this decan. Phobos was one of the twin sons of Ares, the god of battle. The name Phobos is born of the same root as the English word "phobia," though the meaning is slightly different. While in contemporary usage phobia can indicate a fear of any type, Phobos

specifically denoted the panic which put men to rout in battle.

This decan includes a curious contradiction, for it contains horrible and extremely civilized figures alike. Yet this is the nature of the space-between to which the face refers. Unimpeded by any law but their own, those who walk this face long enough become both wise and terrifying.

This face is one of independence, of living and becoming according to one's principles. There is thus a certain royalty to this decan, for its residents connect worlds without becoming beholden to them. There is great benefit to plying these waters between, for they allow the connection of the orthodox and the unorthodox, the known and unknown. The steady commerce between heaven and earth is maintained by a figure standing between them, mediating.

Indeed, this decan may represent more truly the state of the human being than any other, for it is the traditional location of Man, the Kerub of Air in numerous mysteries. Nailed to the mid-point between Solstice and Equinox, this is one of the cross-quarter angles, mid-winter in the Northern hemisphere and celebrated through the rites of Imbolc and Candlemass.

### *Saturn in Aquarius II*

THOSE born with Saturn in the second decan of Aquarius often find themselves living between worlds, capable of existing in several yet a full citizen of none. Though they may feel bound to this fate early in life, it is an ideal position for the establishment of personal sovereignty. Thus many of these natives achieve a profound mental and spiritual independence, yet do not find themselves wholly alienated from the world around them. It is their place to stand with one foot in the pond and the other dry. Though they may yearn to be of merely one world, their unique perspective would be forfeit. Many feel a compulsion toward philosophy, and struggle to act in a manner that is consistent with the principles they discover.

Saturn has no special dignity in this decan, but is strong in Aquarius, and wholly capable of accomplishing all of those works natural to his sphere.

### *Jupiter in Aquarius II*

THOSE born with Jupiter in the second decan of Aquarius have a wisdom which stands comfortably outside of the norm. Their perspectives are often unusual, but they often have a gift for making the unorthodox work. The method of science is dear to them, and they are usually rigorous even in their strangest assertions. The wisdom they seek is that which reconciles heaven and earth, and they are therefore unlikely to be interested in the extremes of materialism or become lost in metaphysical cloud-castles. Rather, it is the connection between worlds which fascinates them, and they are concerned with the relationship of knowledge to wisdom. Those natives of a less spiritual disposition go about finding success in a similar manner—applying the unorthodox in a methodical way to achieve what they will.

Jupiter is of adequate, though not exceeding, strength in Aquarius. Jupiter's power here is to bless the unusual, the new and untried, with rigor and reason.

### *Mars in Aquarius II*

THOSE born with red Mars in the austere reaches of this decan are principled in their approach to conflict, yet are often afflicted with self-righteousness. Here Mars goes to war on behalf of principles, and the natives are often aggressive in their persecution of what they see as ignorance or vice. They are attracted to ethical causes, but may pursue good ends with questionable means.

Mars has no essential dignity in Aquarius, though his bound, according to the Chaldeans and Ptolemy, occurs here, granting him some small strength. In this face Mars inspires fierce rhetoric, and may be mobilized with some success in a war of words and ideas.

### *Sun in Aquarius II*

THOSE born with the Sun in the second decan of Aquarius are stubborn, independent and often possessed of unusual knowledge. These natives seek to escape conventional definition, yet are unwilling to abandon convention



entirely. They straddle the line between the orthodox and the bizarre. Their spirit compels them to seek these liminal places, but such spaces are unstable, defined more by what they are not than what they are. There are thus often issues establishing a stable identity, and these natives may suffer from a lack of confidence. Some compensate with arrogance. Nonetheless, their independence of spirit lends them a unique, practical perspective which is attractive to others, who may follow them.

The Sun is in its detriment in Aquarius and has no special dignity in this decan, robbing most solar operations of power. What benefit might be gained from Sol's journey through this face is best done by observing the appropriate cross-quarter rites.

### *Venus in Aquarius II*

IN the second face of Aquarius, Venus is clever and magnetic, but distant. Those born with Venus here often possess an unusual or exotic charm. Engaged by and often capable of good conversation, they have difficulty expressing immoderate passions or tolerating them in others. Many are emotionally independent, isolated kingdoms unto themselves, and loathe to surrender that sovereignty to others. Thus they prize freedom in love, and individuality in others. They have a special appreciation of the abstract and mathematic, seeing beauty in complexity.

Venus has little strength for magical work in the cold confines of Aquarius. Work with the bright planet is thus not recommended while she crosses this face, as her power to fulfill desires is minimal.

### *Mercury in Aquarius II*

MERCURY, the ruler of this face, lends to its natives innovative and independent intellects. As befits a decan referred to as "Science," their thoughts bridge common wisdom and wild invention, crossing back and forth between the known and unknown. Such travels yield profitable thoughts, valuable to the rebel and the citizen alike. Their use of language is often innovative, as well.

Mercury is the ruler of this face, and has a great power to connect the

concrete and abstract here. The messenger's image impressed upon a talisman coveys greater independence to the mind of the bearer, and makes them capable of communicating effectively with a wide range of persons.

### *Moon in Aquarius II*

SOMEWHERE above solid land, the Moon has a hard time growing roots in this decan of Aquarius. The natives strive to be emotionally independent, but may suffer from a lack of support and feelings of alienation. This alienation may extend to the natives' own needs for support and nurturing, which they are prone to ignore. Many have a detached, philosophical disposition. This lunar position supports the mind, but often at the cost of the body. These natives must remember to cultivate the heart and the body which they depend upon to carry them through this life.

The Moon is peregrine in Aquarius, for it is Saturn's domain and she has little power there. Unless the Moon be full, lunar works are best postponed for a more auspicious time.



## AQUARIUS III: THE KNOT

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WHILE the first decan of Aquarius entailed exile to the frontier and the second face established dialogue between the periphery and the core, the third face of Aquarius sees its figures consider forsaking the known altogether. Yet this decision to fully embrace the unknown is not easy, for karma ties one tight, and its knots complex and durable.

It is the Seven of Swords which represents this decan in the Rider Waite Tarot. On it a sly man sneaks away from an encampment, carrying five swords while two other blades lie abandoned. Called “Unstable Effort” in *Book T* and “Futility” by Aleister Crowley in *The Book of Thoth*, it signifies departure from a situation. Yet the man’s escape disguises the struggle which this face entails, for it is not a simple severance. The swords the figure absconds with suggest that he has not left penniless, but has instead paused to collect what is of value before departing. As Crowley states in *The Book of Thoth*, “There is vacillation, a wish to compromise, a certain toleration.” The choice to abandon the situation, and the process of obtaining what swords may be salvaged is not simple, but arises out of long vacillation and consideration. The image

of the man leaving the encampment is thus the product of this face, not the complex process which it is a result of.

One aspect of the tension found here is a slowly growing disgust and frustration with the state of things. This affect is made plain in several of the older images for this decan, many of which depict wrathful and insulting figures. Ibn Ezra describes an angry, restless man pacing about. Agrippa, in his *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, describes a “black and angry man,” and adds that “the signification of this is in expressing insolence, and imprudence” The *Picatrix* also notes that this is a face of “insulting behavior.” Those who pace this decan are well aware of the problems with their world, and prone to tirades about its weaknesses and critiques of its imperfections. Thus both ill-temper and disillusionment are found here, yet these states are a necessary prelude.

On a spiritual level, this face represents disenchantment with the fabric of everyday life and its petty terrors. It is divine discontent, the same that Siddhartha Gautama felt before he left his comfortable home. Fittingly, the *Yavanajataka*, a 4<sup>th</sup> century CE Indian text, describes the resident of this decan as an ascetic, the only one of thirty six to which this title is applied.

Yet there is much to do in this face, and many decisions to make before departing. Indeed, one might tarry a lifetime, or several, at this threshold. The ultimate trajectory of this figure is not clear, as only the act of departure is visible. When one abandons one’s place of birth, family, culture, religion or even reality, where does one end up? Leaving the known, one therefore enters the unknown. This journey is depicted by another card, The Fool. In many iterations, including the Rider Waite one, the Fool possesses only what he has tied into a cloth at the end of a stick—the five swords salvaged from the encampment. The Fool is depicted about to step off a cliff, poised to take a plunge, either metaphorical or sickeningly literal. What lies at the bottom of that chasm?

A fragment of Hellenistic lore, *The 36 Airs of the Zodiac*, attributes to this face the ancient Egyptian god Osiris, lord of death and the resurrection which followed. The thoughts of this fragment’s unknown author may be obscure to us, but there is a resonance here, for it was Osiris who ruled over the most sacred and final departure from the known—death. The ancient Egyptians’ understanding of death, and thus Osiris, was, however, not our own. For them death was not an end, but a transition to Amenti, a world like our own but more noble, and populated by the gods themselves. The dead dwelt there,

much as they did in life—laboring, drinking and conversing. Yet the dead did not simply close their mortal eyes and awake in glorious Amenti. The transition between the two worlds was both epic and perilous, full of monsters and secrets. The method of crossing successfully from one world to the other was regarded as a complex subject, treated at length in countless Egyptian Books of the Dead. It is here that we find the residents of this decan, preparing for a journey whose end they cannot know.

In this face there is frustration. Resentment builds, and anger. Critiques develop. Yet the residents of this face are not moved to simple action by their disgust, for attachments remain whose roots are not casually exhumed, treasures not easily left behind. The final separation with the known will take place, but not before debts are paid, and what is of value is salvaged. This decan thus illuminates karmic entanglements and oversees liberation from them.

### *Saturn in Aquarius III*

SATURN is strong in this face, and places its natives in complicated situations. They are torn between leaving and staying, for they feel duty keenly, and do not like abandon their obligations, yet they have an internal compulsion to break free and find their own way. This tension creates suffering, but over time they may become both independent and responsible, for they bind themselves only to what is worthy, and follow through on what they have promised.

Saturn's strength here is great, and all manner of Saturnine operations benefit. Yet it is his excellence in this face to bind men and women to their principles, and to ward against karmic entrapments. A talisman impressed with the image of Saturn in this face offers this power to its bearer, but integrity has a price. Though it may be for the greater good, both wealth and relationships which are not in accord with the Tao may find themselves on the sacrificial pyre.

### *Jupiter in Aquarius III*

THOSE born with Jupiter in this face understand when to quit—to leave what is no longer profitable. Here Jupiter helps guard its natives against the misfortune which hunts those who stay too long and grasp too firmly. They are good at salvaging what has ceased to be of use, extracting value from what approaches desiccation. Many know how to part on good terms, to sever connections gently.

Jupiter in this decan can add grace to departures and exits, and rites conducted for such a purpose will find success. Yet the planet is not otherwise strong, and the majority of operations natural to the Jovian sphere are unlikely to produce more than a mediocre result.

### *Mars in Aquarius III*

RED Mars' fire is difficult to manage in this decan. The volatility of Mars exacerbates the frustration natural to this face. Though they seek freedom, the natives may find themselves bound to people by enmity. It is important they do not content themselves with sullen critique, but actually liberate themselves from the people and situations they rage against. Properly cultivated, Mars in this decan is a liberatory force, the sword which strikes off shackles.

In this face Mars has the strength to sever connections and abandon what has no use. Yet the departures that Mars facilitates here are rough, and often laced with antagonism. Other planets in this decan are superior for unbinding. This combination is of no use for a permanent talisman.

### *Sun in Aquarius III*

THE Sun's light is faint in the third decan of Aquarius. The natives are detached but prone to frustration. Their strength is their lack of attachment to their own identity, which enables great perspective on their lives, and a capacity for introspection and reflection. They have an interest in the mysteries of the world which often exceeds their interest in themselves. This strength is also their weakness, though, for life presents not only a play to watch, but roles to play. Identity is a complicated affair for those born with the Sun here,

for the personal is often occluded by the universal.

The Sun is in its detriment in Aquarius, and therefore generally unsuitable for Solar works. Sol's light can illuminate karmic entanglements, but will be of minimal aid in untangling them.

### *Venus in Aquarius III*

THE third decan of Aquarius is challenging for Venus, as the face's emphasis on departure is contrary to the entanglement of passions which Venus oversees. Those born with Venus in this face will experience many partings. Many bonds formed by these natives are ill fated, for it is theirs to learn when not to connect with people, and to witness the consequences of pursuing relations contrary to one's best wisdom. With time, many learn to appreciate what arises, yet cling to nothing as it passes away. Such detachment is of great value for their happiness, and allays many difficulties.

Considered the ruler of this decan in one system, Venus is nonetheless of little use for traditional works of love and luxury. Venus may be called on to facilitate a gentle withdrawal of the passions from an object of desire, or to cultivate the ability to take detached pleasure in all things. A talisman might be made for the latter purpose, though its spiritual benefits may come with a material cost.

### *Mercury in Aquarius III*

MERCURY in the third decan of Aquarius makes for natives with detached minds, capable of ranging broadly. Their capacity for thought unfettered by emotion is great unless directly contradicted within the birthchart. This quality results from Mercury's excellence in this decan—the fine art of untangling emotions from thoughts. A mind thusly refined can, given time and effort, excel in academic and scientific fields. There is sometimes also a talent with words, for in the untangling of idea and affect, the nature of each is revealed. However, if Mercury is afflicted, the capacity for clarity is interfered with, and the natives' minds may well be gardens in need of weeding.

In the third face of Aquarius Mercury is suitable for the works appropriate to his sphere, as the messenger facilitates travel and communication well



enough here. Though of little use for practical sorceries, Mercury's capacity to clear the mind in this face makes it a valuable focus for contemplative rites.

### *Moon in Aquarius III*

THE Moon finds a strange home in the third decan of Aquarius. These natives are citizens of no land, yet never without roots. They are emotionally independent, capable of finding comforts where none seem to exist. Anchored in the invisible, they are less affected by the churnings of the manifest. There is sadness for them, and sometimes alienation, but they endure it well, for they are accepting and able to let go of what cannot be theirs.

In this face Luna has the power to make the exile comfortable, the alien feel at home. A talisman impressed with her image allows one to grow roots in the ever present sky. It aids the mind in letting fly free what cannot be, but draws what is truly required. It does not bring wealth or happiness, but the capacity to abide.



## PISCES I: THE LABYRINTH

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IN the decans of Pisces we see the process of return, the beginning of the end of differentiated awareness. These faces show a fearful and ecstatic going back, a drunken stumbling home. Our origin is, of course, not of this world, but what came before and lies afterward. Our relationship with what lies beyond the boundaries characterizes all of Pisces' decans.

The first face of Pisces is in one system ruled by Saturn, the cold lord of structure. Here figures stumble in darkness, their fingers tracing walls they cannot see. We come to recognize our imprisonment in our own reality construct here, a labyrinth we ever wander. Yet the discovery of its walls portend its destruction, and the possibility of liberation. Outside its subtle enclosure waits a world as yet uncorrupted by our assumptions.

It is a place where much will be left behind, for the expectations we enter this phase with are not those that we will leave with. This can be seen in this face's representation in the Rider Waite Tarot. A man, his back turned, retreats towards a shoreline cloaked by night. This is the Eight of Cups, called the Lord of "Abandoned Success" in *Book T* and "Stagnation" in *The Book of Thoth*.

What was previously important is abandoned as a siren song echoes from the deeps, promising truth with vague but irresistible words. When the process of this phase, the disaffection with the former real, is at its peak, we see the stagnation the Thoth card is so named for. Yet these names, as well as many other traditional images, miss the point of this phase entirely. They point toward the area abandoned, not to what it was abandoned for.

Beneath the waves, deep within the labyrinth of images and constructs, lies a revelatory truth—we have always existed in this structure, but we are only now discovering it. When pursued consciously, this phase involves a quest to map the invisible walls of reality, to find the subtle structures which guide human life. Here we see the practice of psychoanalysis, and divinatory attempts to discern the structure of fate. It is a slow, groping cartography of an invisible maze.

The discovery of the labyrinth also brings with it the question of its maker, initiating a confrontation with the Demiurgos of the reality structure in question. On a personal level, it is the discovery of our unconscious, and the Maker we find is none other than ourselves. Yet other mazes exist beyond the psychological, nestled concentrically, like Russian Dolls. The structure of one's Fate might also be discerned here, its shape the work of a sadistic dramaturge—what some might call our True Will.

The successful confrontation with the demonized demiurgos leads to an internalization of its power. In discovering that it was none other than a portion of ourselves which erected this reality, we gain the power to build as we see fit, with what materials we have assembled. The maze is ours to re-create, our soul the architect. Yet sometimes the tortuous labyrinth holds within its secret heart a wisdom we did not expect. Its being is no abomination, but exactly as it should be. The realization transforms the structure itself from a prison to a palace. Liberation is achieved here through insight alone.

The outermost layer of the maze is one we did not create ourselves. Here are the laws carved into the flesh of the living world, and over these we have no dominion. Yet in knowing the deepest and highest laws we are freed from the onerous burden of false laws and pseudo-commandments. Naught remains but to live with knowledge, for no true law can be broken.

This face augurs a mystery emerging, accompanied by shifts in our perception of the real. The images of this face may be graven in order to facilitate the embrace of a deeper level of reality, or to negotiate the shifting planes of one that has already become unstable. It can also be used to create confusion

and the type of unfixed personal reality traditionally referred to as schizophrenia.

On a visible level, this face portends journeys and wanderings. Though the impetus behind these ambulations may be, as Ibn Ezra reports, “going home,” home is not easily defined in this decan, for it is most truly our point of origin, a place unknown to geography. Much depends on whether the seeker knows the nature of what is sought.

The first face of Pisces thus holds a great mystery—the convergence point of perception and reality. Yet few who wander these planes understand their situation, and the halls of the labyrinth hold more madmen than seekers.

### *Saturn in Pisces I*

SATURN is considered the ruler of this face, and strengthens all of the fundamental significations. Those born with Saturn here often have a sense their lives are governed by mysterious laws, and are quick to withdraw into reverie in search of them. These abandonments of the waking world are not mere fancy, though, for these natives are more likely to trap themselves in cocoons spun from childhood trauma and partial truths. In this decan, Saturn pushes its natives into confrontation with both the invisible labyrinth and its maker. Without a way out, the nature of character, fate and reality must be stared down and a peace arranged. There is a profound wisdom to be had here if the native accepts the nature of their situation, but the potential for delusion is nonetheless profound.

Saturn's time in the first face of Pisces opens a door into the labyrinth. Images can be crafted here to reinforce a particular reality structure, earthing and hardening dreams. Contemplative work with Saturn in this face will reveal the nature of the story one has superimposed upon their life, and the degree to which it works to imprison and protect. A tool, a door charm, might also be made here to allow access to the dreaming in which such architecture exists. A personal talisman is possible, but to be in contact with such an item consistently would pull one away from the waking world, leading to the external stagnation associated with this decan.

### *Jupiter in Pisces 1*

IN this face, Jupiter enables a profound acceptance of subtle structure. For those born with Jupiter in the first face of Pisces, revelations of the hidden tend to come as the blooming of wisdom rather than the unfolding of horror. These natives tend to experience the secretive mechanics of the world as decidedly benign. This natal position offers, with time and cultivation, the opportunity to grow a personal reality in harmony with more universal laws. To the degree that they develop this ability, it is likely that they will be able to confer the understanding upon others, acting as teachers. Those born to Jupiter here may, especially if the position is afflicted, take their optimism to the point of naivete.

In first face of Pisces, Jupiter offers an optimistic but profound power. It may be invoked as a blessing for those caught between stable personal realities, or to aid one on their own quest deeper down the wormhole. Engraved upon a permanent talisman, it provides a low key optimism and faith in the hidden mechanics of being, as well as providing its bearer with a measure of good luck.

### *Mars in Pisces 1*

MARS in this Decan points to the hidden rules of power. Those born with Mars here rarely adopt a straightforward, forceful manner, but contour their efforts to the subtle laws they discover. The martial practice here is like Tai Chi and the approach to conflict circular. Many of the natives find power in their ability to actively manipulate other people's realities, disorienting their opponents or would be tormentors with camouflage or subterfuge. These natives often evidence artistic talent, for their martial energies tend to run in the direction of the smith rather than that of the warrior. As with any planet in this face, there is a capacity for delusion, and those born to this configuration must be careful not to lose themselves in vain fantasies of power or influence.

While Mars is in the first decan of Pisces it offers an understanding of the arms and armor one uses to resist the aggressive imposition of foreign realities onto one's personal sphere. Singular works of contemplation and petitions suffice here, for a permanent talisman will, in most cases, draw the conflicts it equips one for.

### *Sun in Pisces 1*

THE Sun in this Decan places its natives squarely in the unseen maze. Wanderers, seekers and poets are born here, their quality different insofar as they understand the pull they feel to know both their labyrinth and its maker. The fantasies, visions and intuitions which cross this face provide a rich well of creativity. Yet the world imagined is as much a prison as a creative retreat for these natives, and many have a difficult time bringing the riches they find there back to the daylit world. They have a penchant for getting trapped in unpleasant fairy tales, narrative loops they refuse to break free of. It is important for those born with the Sun here to remember to not lose touch with the concrete layer of their life.

Though not suited to traditional Solar work, the Sun in the first face of Pisces shines a light on the mythic structure of human life. Works of contemplation might yield an enhanced understanding of the structure of human stories, leading to both artistic and psychological insights.

### *Venus in Pisces 1*

VENUS in this Decan presents an issue, for while Venus is exalted and most happy in Pisces, this decan presents restrictions which often entail the abandonment of objects of desire. Those born with Venus here are thus wont to leave what they once desired. As their internal landscape changes, their attachment to objects (and subjects) of desire changes. This can lead to a stagnation of emotional energies for the native, but if understood correctly, it yields a deep truth—all joys and pains are temporary. The highest manifestation of Venus is the non-attached joy in the arising and passing away of phenomena so prized by certain Buddhists. For those whose passions are not spiritualized, but merely romanticized, this position reeks of tragedy, especially if afflicted.

While passing through this decan, Venus offers insight into emotional patterns and a number of aesthetic revelations, especially in regard to narrative structure. Works of charm, attraction and influence are certainly possible here, but their effects are unlikely to endure. A talisman properly impressed with the power of Venus in this face will draw to the bearer much that they desire, only to trigger the realization that desire is a fickle magnet.

It teaches the joy and sadness of arising and passing away, the finite quality of all stories.

### *Mercury in Pisces I*

MERCURY in this Decan holds a strange set of keys for traversing the terrain of the invisible, yet for those born with Mercury here, it is the manifest world that is full of mysterious problems. Mercury is considered badly debilitated in Pisces, and the linear world of train schedules, shopping lists and homework assignments can be daunting. The intellect's power feeds directly into the imagination for these natives, abandoning the left brain as much as possible. Many of these natives have an almost psychic perspective that they have difficulty finding the right words for. Those that do often show a talent for poetry and storytelling. Language is subverted by these natives, sometimes with great skill. Nonetheless, this is a difficult place for natal Mercury to reside, and those born to it face a number of challenges in the messenger's sphere.

The understanding of subtle but causal flows of energy that Mercury's time in this decan provides can also be put to clever use here in a variety of divinatory practices, particularly those auguries which are cast in dreams. The power of Mercury here is to explore what is behind language; thus in this face the messenger is utterly unsuitable for traditional Mercurial works and talismans, and such works should be avoided.

### *Moon in Pisces I*

THE MOON in this decan denotes a sensitive and dreamy but contained disposition. These natives are often ensconced in a private world, a nest woven from their experiences. They tend to be insightful but strongly beholden to the past, slow to abandon childhood's emotional structures. Those born here often need regular periods of withdrawal from life's pressures. These natives need to learn not merely to retreat to their internal worlds, but to take responsibility for their maintenance and creation.

Waxing, the Moon's power here can be imaged so as to support the creation of a small reality in a work of art. There is also some protective power

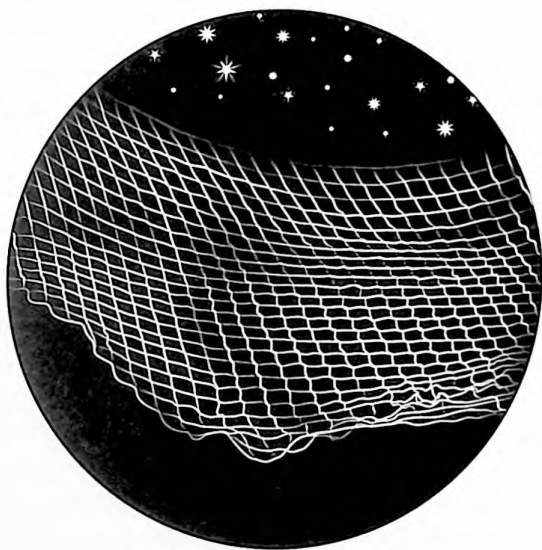


here, especially on a psychic level. Waning, the power of the Moon can be ritually invoked to liberate emotional energy bound to a particular perception of things. It allows release from the binding power of beliefs.



## PISCES II: THE NET

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IN the second face of Pisces we see images of success and satisfaction in the visible world. This is in contrast to the images we saw in the first face, where men drifted from place to place, their labor and world unstable while something revelatory stirred. Here the deeper reality that was merely emergent in the first face is present, demanding to be integrated. The figures of the second face are anchored in the invisible, yet step forward to play important roles in the visible world.

Here the central conflict is how to reconcile one's understandings of the true nature of reality with the world-as-it-is. It is thus a face of finding harmony with apparent reality of things while living and embodying one's ideals. Although a trial in its own right, it is a more fortunate face than the first, for it lacks the confusion and jarring ruptures found there.

This is the phase in which we are challenged to reconcile beliefs, ideals and the way things are. The result of this successful reconciliation is "Happiness", which the associated Nine of Cups takes as its name in *The Book of Thoth*. The result of an inability to reconcile one with the other, will, howev-

er, yield the inverse—misery, the state of one for whom there is no harmony between their inner and outer.

Meanwhile, the full name for this card, according to *Book T*, is the “Lord of Material Happiness,” for the art of establishing harmony between the inner and the outer is rarely without material rewards. The rich and satisfied looking man pictured on the Rider Waite’s Nine of Cups makes this clear, as does the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*’s mention of “a woman of a good countenance, and well adorned.”

The images of wealth and influence associated with this decan may not be inaccurate, but they miss the essence of what occurs in the face, for the picture the product rather than the process. The ability to maintain a harmonious relationship between material and spiritual layers of life is the art of following the Tao itself, exemplified in the iconography of Taoist immortals, at play in the material world but not beholden to it. If riches follow his/her Way, then so be it.

Indeed, several traditional images suggest that the material riches are the product of a spiritual labor. Indeed, the *Picatrix* pictures “a man upside down with his head below and his feet raised up, and in his hand is a tray from which food has been eaten.” This inversion, pictured in most versions of the Hanged Man card of the Tarot, signifies that material and spiritual priorities have been inverted, and that the figure is grounded in the invisible, rather than upon the earth. Yet the inverted figure offers sustenance, proving that this strange act is not futile, but fruitful.

Still, knowledge of this art is hardly sufficient for its successful practice. The many schools of the Tao do not teach a simple method, for the art of reconciling the visible and invisible must apply to every entanglement between the two—every possible permutation of yin and yang. The 64 changing hexagrams of I Ching provide only the briefest sample of the situations those within this face may be called to harmonize.

The wide range of experiences this decan entails makes the figures found within it remarkably protean. While in the first decan of Pisces the characters disappear into the sea, in the second they emerge from it the fluid sons and daughters of the deeps. Thus does Ibn Ezra’s *The Beginning of Wisdom* picture a woman at sea, wishing to go on to land.

The adaptable residents of this face, whether Taoist Immortals or common thieves, share a capacity for both subtlety and subterfuge. A fragment of a Hellenistic manuscript, *The 36 Aires of the Zodiac*, attributes to this decan

Dolos, the daimon of trickery and deceit. Aesop reports that Dolos was once apprenticed to the titan Prometheus, the very craftsman who fashioned the forms of man and woman. Prometheus had decided that he would create a statue of Alethia, truth. Working the clay, he gave her magnificent form, but just before he finished he received a summons from mighty Zeus, who called him away on urgent business. Dolos, alone and eager to prove his craft, began shaping a copy of the magnificent statue that Prometheus had wrought. He copied Alethia's form perfectly, but by the time he was ready to construct the feet of his statue, he found he had run out of clay. Prometheus returned shortly thereafter to find Dolos, who was at that point fearful of his master's wrath. But Prometheus was not angry, but instead struck by the artifice of his student, and decided that both statues should enter the kiln together. Once they had been fired, Prometheus brought each to life. Alethia, truth, walked with graceful, even steps. Her incomplete sister Pseudologos, Falsehood, moved awkwardly, for her unfinished feet marred her stride.

Dolos could thus be seen in a wholly negative light, but this tale holds more nuance. It can be argued that the moral is in fact that the truth cannot be copied. Though some superficial truths may be adequately represented, form utterly fails the profound. This is the mystery behind the widespread prohibition against representing the absolute, the real sin of idolatry.

The second face of Pisces thus contains tricksters, liars who try paint the portraits of their understandings and sculpt the form of their visions. These acts must be trickery, cunning deceptions, for what of depth can be captured within mere form? These creative acts, these deceptions, are integral to the play of finite and infinite, inner and outer, that make up the dual essence of the decan. These flawed copies are the only manner in which dreams can become real, and imperfect flesh the only possible vehicle for the soul through this world.

The harmonious interpenetration of realms is the essential formula of this decan and its fruit is satisfaction, which is called happiness by those who do not possess it.

### *Saturn in Pisces II*

SATURN is difficult in this face, for the ancient one tends to exaggerate the boundary between the material and spiritual aspects of life, preventing the

easy and harmonious interchange which is the goal of this face. Many of the natives will suffer this separation for the first portion of their lives, but with maturity most learn to navigate it. Those born with Saturn in this face must learn to accept the boundary between the imaginary and the real, yet also recognize that this great wall contains many gates which allow for meaningful exchange between the two realms.

Saturn's time in this face sternly enforces the divide between inner and outer. Yet this boundary, like the corpus collosum, actually serves to connect dual worlds. Work can be done here to bind the visible and invisible sides of a person's life together. Saturn's visage in this decan can also be impressed to restrict access to one realm or another, nailing certain gateways shut for the duration of the binding.

### *Jupiter in Pisces II*

JUPITER is considered the ruler of this face, and is most powerful in bestowing harmony and happiness here. This is an almost uniquely positive placement, for it dignifies both the spiritual and the material. Those born with Jupiter in this auspicious position have a gift for navigating a wide variety of circumstances harmoniously, evidencing a plastic wisdom which can reconcile even difficult situations. There is a subtlety to this quality, though, so much so that the natives may be quite unconscious of their ability to adapt. Though doubtless a blessing, those born to Jupiter in this position may exhibit a degree of naïve optimism, or overestimate their ability to deal with difficult circumstances, especially if Jupiter is afflicted.

In this face Jupiter offers an abundance of magical uses. It is one of the few images which can be impressed upon a ring or other permanent, wearable talisman without reservations. Properly made, it brings an increase of wealth, status and harmony to its bearer.

### *Mars in Pisces II*

IN the second face of Pisces, Mars weaves a net of power from the visible and invisible alike. In conflict with others, these natives generally prefer guile over force, and many are adept at attaining the result they desire without

overt conflict. They have a keen perception of other people's patterns, and use their understanding to protect themselves and, when necessary, to attack others. They tend to be peaceful in nature but surprising able when threatened. This is very magically inclined placement, and many of those with natal Mars here will show some talent for sorcery.

In this decan, Mars is useful for works of guile, deception and camouflage. Meditative work with this power can reveal the power of the insubstantial over the substantial, and yield insight into the role of perception in conflict. A talisman impressed with this face will lend one subtlety in asserting their will, though it may pull the mind in a selfish direction or otherwise disturb the bearer's peace.

### *Sun in Pisces II*

THOSE factors which contribute or detract from the harmony between mundane and spiritual spheres can be plainly seen when the light of the Sun shines on this face. The natives are born between worlds, and have a natural ability to move through them. The fortunate among them find the Tao, and become what they need to reconcile the dualities they come across. Others, less fortunate, are prone to feel torn by the divide between the spiritual and material. Happy or miserable, they are generally adaptable people, able to fill those roles open to them. It is important for those with the Sun here to recognize that they are like water, taking the shape of their container, and choose wisely what they pour themselves into.

The Sun's time in Pisces grants the ability to exist at the convergence point between different worlds. A talisman with the proper image will grant its holder understanding of how to slip through gates and around barriers which separate the different realms of god and man. Additionally, work with the Sun in this decan reveals the Way to the state of detached satisfaction some call happiness.

### *Venus in Pisces II*

VENUS finds great pleasure in this face. Those born with Venus here revel in joys both high and low. A talent for the arts is not uncommon, and many of

the natives are adept at acquiring money, although many are equally masterful in spending it. They have a wide emotional range and find that there are few people whom they cannot relate to, if they so choose. With Venus in such an ideal place, many of them develop unrealistically high expectations for the amount of love and pleasure in their life. Their desire for harmony may also lead them to ignore problems, and some degree of delusion is therefore often present, especially if Venus is afflicted.

Venus is potent here, and charms may be crafted with her image to bring both wealth and affection. A talisman proper impressed can draw money, fine works of art and facilitate the pleasures of the flesh. It offers lessons on how to enjoy all that life has to offer, though if the bearer is utterly without discrimination in their pursuit of pleasure, they will not be protected from the natural consequences.

### *Mercury in Pisces II*

MERCURY is troubled in the second face of Pisces, for the nature of the decan cannot easily be netted by language. Those born with Mercury here have minds which see through words. Many grasp meaning in a more direct, psychic manner, but have a difficult time adequately expressing what they see in a cogent, rational manner. Their natal language is more akin to music, and many wish they could communicate in such a way. Their intuition springs from the proximity of their mind to their souls, yet when their souls are stormy, their minds often follow suit. It is important for them not to let their emotions distort their thinking.

Due to its essential debility, Mercury in this face is not useful for the majority of works natural to his sphere. Crafting a lasting talisman for Mercury in this face is not recommended, for it will give bad luck in travel, communication, and trigger a variety of unnecessary confusions.

### *Moon in Pisces II*

THOSE born with the Moon in this decan of Pisces are sensitive, intuitive and, unless the lunar position is afflicted, generally pleasant in disposition. They have a good understanding of what will make them happy, and unless



impeded by circumstance, will amble steadily in that direction. They are generally understanding of others and quietly confident of their way in the world. Many of these natives are, however, indulgent, and prone to a variety of excesses, which, if the Moon is afflicted, may translate into addiction or other debilities.

When the waxing Moon is in this face, its power may be tapped to grant fulfillment. A talisman properly impressed with the waxing Moon in this face would provide modest support and protection along the Way through life. If the Moon were waning while in this face, then a rite could be conducted to help one strip away internal obstacles to happiness.



## PISCES III: A CUP OF BLOOD

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THE third phase of Pisces, the last of the 36 faces, comes just before the cycle's death and rebirth. The sequence is almost complete, and thus there is no need to be conservative, no point in half measures. Here, we see images of the mad quest for an ideal.

As is appropriate, this phase is presided over by Mars. There is an impatience here, a boredom with compromise and unwillingness to accept anything but what is utterly right. While brought into a harmonious equilibrium in the second face of Pisces, the spiritual and mundane layers of life must part ways here. Judgments must be made, and sacrifices, too.

The last decan of Pisces is a place of martyrdom, of being willing to sacrifice everything. It is about the attainment of one's greatest desire, no matter the cost. It is thus the place of perfect victory, the happy ending. The Ten of Cups, identified with this decan in the Rider Waite tarot, displays a man and woman in union, their children dancing before them while a rainbow shines overhead. The title of the card is "Perfected Success." Success here is not displayed in terms of material wealth, but instead emotional riches. The

image pictured is a vision of the happy ending, the conclusion of so many stories that it has become a cliché. It is the attainment of the heart's desire, the reunion with the beloved. This image was not an innovation of artist Pamela Colman Smith, but instead an elaboration on a scene given in Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* and illustrated in the *Astrolabium Planum*. In these earlier instances, the children are omitted, and the image is simply of a young man and maiden in loving union.

On a mundane level, this face inspires the lust and desire implied by these pictures, but the true object of the passions is a merger with the universe itself. The face and body of the beloved are a mask, an entry point into the experience of all-as-bliss.

As a narrative, the third face unfolds as the quest for true and perfect love. Yet such stories, especially when told by the world, do not always have happy endings. A willingness to sacrifice everything is necessary, but not sufficient. One must have an ideal or a love worth sacrificing for. Many of those who walk this decan are only too willing to engage themselves in the romantic and often tragic stories which swarm this decan. Thus this face is littered with broken dreams and failed martyrs—those who sacrificed themselves to an illusion.

Therefore does the *Picatrix* picture "A sad man and of evil thoughts thinking on deceptions and treachery," while Ibn Ezra and early Indian images display people screaming in terror. Though there can be no greater pleasure than the union with the beloved, no pain is greater than its frustration, or worse yet, the betrayal of the person or ideal whom one has sacrificed so much for.

This face thus contains heights of agony and ecstasy. The pain of betrayal results from investing in the wrong ideal, mistaking the face of the beloved. The eagerness to enact the romantic quest can lead one to overlook whether the situation in fact warrants it. If those who roam this decan are to be spared repeated disappointments, they must learn to discriminate. Yet even the most discriminating will see some dreams shatter, some sacrifices rendered vain.

A fragmentary Hellenistic text, *The 36 Airts of the Zodiac*, states that it is in this decan that Elpis, the daimon of hope, resides. Elpis appears in one of Greek mythology's most well known stories—that of Pandora's box. In its popular form, Pandora, the first human woman, was given a sealed urn (or box) which she was told never to open. Tempted and curious, she unsealed it—and out swarmed a plague of malicious spirits. Old Age, Death, Sorrow,

and other mortal tortures numbered among them. Mankind, exposed to this host of horrors, was forever cursed. Pandora, shocked, probed the depths of the urn and found only one spirit remaining. As Hesiod writes:

*Only Hope was left within her unbreakable house,  
she remained under the lip of the jar,  
and did not fly away.*

Elpis was sometimes juxtaposed to Moros in Greek myth. While Elpis offers hope, Moros, the daimon of doom, proffers a vision of unending desolation and pain. It is in this face and those that dwell within it that the two contend. Hope can vanquish doom, yet misplaced hope will inevitably fall victim to doom's dark arguments.

The third face of Pisces, the last of the decans, looks always to the end, the ultimate meaning of the entire cycle. Moros whispers that it is pointless, and that the wheel of incarnation is merely a cruel carnival ride. In argument, Elpis points to beauty, love and the real possibility of happy endings. The last decan is thus a miniature of all incarnation, asking the most important questions and offering the most impassioned answers.

### ***Saturn in Pisces III***

THE early years of those born with Saturn in this face often place barriers between them and what they most desire. Early disappointments, frustrations, and betrayals are common. Many develop a dim view of the world. Pessimism, as well as some degree of depression, is not uncommon. With time, though, they come to understand the structure of the process by which one attains the object of their desire. Satisfaction comes later to these natives, arriving in tandem with wisdom.

The old one's image might be graven here to bind one to the pursuit of an ideal or desire. Such bindings are dangerous, for the attainment of the goal will necessitate sacrifice. Unless one is willing to pay the price, such an entanglement is ill advised.

### *Jupiter in Pisces III*

JUPITER is strong in Pisces, and provides its natives with insight into the wild, romantic and tragic nature of the quest for human meaning. Though prone to impassioned sacrifices and hopeless doldrums, those born with Jupiter here often temper their excesses with wisdom. The impossible quests which line this decan function as a teaching tool for these natives, who are able to endure and learn from the stories they indulge in. When Jupiter is afflicted here, the natives are likely to overestimate their ability to deal with the dramas they cast themselves in.

When Jupiter is the third face of Pisces, charms can be made that bring good luck to those who engage in mad quests. These talismans will function to protect the passionate, and aid them in learning from their adventures. Jupiter here brings hope and optimism, and Elpis can therefore be invoked to banish Moros' heavy cloud.

### *Mars in Pisces III*

MARS is the natural ruler of this decan, and bestows upon those born with the red planet here the passion and bravery needed to gain the heart's desire. Their zeal is, however, often far greater than their discrimination. These natives will attain what and who they desire, but satisfaction may well elude them. Their capacity to act in accord with their beliefs is a strength, but that strength must be matched by critical thought. Without developing discrimination, their ability to attain the objects of their passion will not result in satisfaction. It is very important that these natives find ideals and people worth sacrificing for.

As the ruler of this decan, Mars unlocks the full potency of this face. His image can be impressed into a proper medium to create a potent talisman. The bearer will have their lusts sated and their passions emboldened, though should guard against being derailed by meaningless but emotionally engaging dramas. Mars in this decan may also be petitioned in a single rite to refresh the passions or help open the way to the satisfaction of a heartfelt desire.

### *Sun in Pisces III*

THOSE born with the Sun in the third decan of Pisces find themselves cast as the tragic but seductive protagonist of their own tale. They ride high on waves of elation and are cast down into pits of despair. These emotional oscillations often take the native's view of the world with them, showing all as futile one week while everything is revealed as a blessing the next. They have a romantic, passionate disposition, and many are forever seekers, searching out something, someone, to give everything to. It is very helpful for them to learn to temper the extremes of hope and despair which they are prone to.

The Sun can in this decan be invoked to trigger a deeper awareness of what one truly desires. Layers of the self become transparent under its light, revealing core passions. In the later degrees, when Sol approaches his equinoctial station, he may petitioned through the appropriate seasonal rites to great effect.

### *Venus in Pisces III*

VENUS' traditional degree of exaltation falls within this decan. Venus finds in this face a place of perfect indulgence. Those born with the bright planet here draw their dreams to them like eager lovers. Their desire-nature is strong, and places in their path the people and things which they want. This power, however, operates independently of conscious intent, and they may draw to themselves odd bits of night time fancy. Deeply buried but potent emotional complexes exert a magnetism in their life, and if the position is afflicted, even their nightmares may court them. Nonetheless, this is a blessed position, for these natives are unlikely to be denied the satisfaction of even outlandish desires.

In this decan, Venus' image can be engraved so that wild desires for luxury and love can be satisfied. Charms for love or lust made in this phase are very powerful, but offer no protection from getting what one wants.

### *Mercury in Pisces III*

MERCURY is debilitated in this decan, for the rational mind has difficulty maneuvering its impassioned landscape. Those born with the swift planet here have wide reaching thoughts, and their minds turn easily to the whole of human existence. For many their interest in the 10,001 human tales translates into a talent for story telling. Whether this capacity is mobilized to deceive or entertain is another question. Objectivity is foreign to many of these natives, as they are skeptical of truths which do not arise directly from experience. The minds of those born with Mercury here are buffeted by hurricanes of pleasure and pain, hope and despair, making the maintenance of an impartial perspective difficult. Their ideas easily become the servants of their emotions, but with time and insight, they learn to competently navigate desire's fierce currents.

Mercury's time in the third decan of Pisces does not bode well for most work within the Mercurial sphere. Rites tapping into this energy are not recommended, and the creation of Mercurial talismans should be avoided. The intellect is blown about by desire, but has little power bring about its satisfaction.

### *Moon in Pisces III*

IN the third decan of Pisces the Moon gives flesh to works of imagination. Those born with Luna here are alternately restless and dreamy. While languorous in some respects, they will give chase to those matters which stir their hearts. Their ability to link their passion to their imagination is potent, but such dreams sometimes lead these natives astray. Those with the Moon here are often drawn to re-enact childhood emotional dramas, dressing old stories in new clothes. Clarifying the origin of their desires is thus of great importance.

The Moon is of sufficient here for most Lunar work. While the Moon is waxing in this decan of Pisces, its image may be painted or otherwise impressed to aid in the manifestation of a fantasy, while the Moon waning in this decan can be of use in purging oneself of unhelpful desires.



## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Alchemical Trinities

THE intent upon beginning this work was to engage with the decans as directly as possible, to absorb the history of images attributed to them, to study their effects in astrological charts and thusly to fix the mind's eye firmly upon them. The prospect of deducing their meaning through schematization was not only apart from this initial mindset, but intentionally divorced from it.

Yet somewhere in the process of immersion patterns emerged which again and again suggested the same mathematics the author initially resisted.

One of those patterns was the relationships each set of three decans bore to one another. In the first face of a given sign, a force emerges to be discovered, in the second a stable relationship is formed with it and in the third come those factors which press for an abandonment of the balance created in the second.

In alchemical terms, the second or middle face of every sign represents a conjunction between the salt and sulphur facilitated by the mercury, or, in other terms, the stable joining of matter and spirit by means of the mind. The first decan of each sign introduces the nature of the matter to which spirit will reconcile itself, and the third shows the spirit forced to separate with the matter. Despite repeated attempts to resist Procrustean frameworks, this pattern emerged repeatedly.

This three fold pattern of coming together, union and separation is already present within the language of astrology as the Modes—Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable. It can thus be said, in the language of astrology, that each sign contains a cardinal, fixed and mutable decan. It should be noted that this scheme is implied by the Jagannāth system of planetary rulership in Vedic astrology.

These three terms are thus in many ways synonymous with the introduction of the matter (Salt), the coming into balance with the matter (Mercury) and the need to separate from it (Sulphur). The first phase can also be said to

correspond to the famous "Coagula" or "coming-together" of alchemy, for it is in this phase that the separate components recognize each other and begin their magnetized dance. In the second face of each sign the components are unified and stabilized, corresponding to the various states of union in alchemy titled "Conjunctio," a concept similar to, but by no means identical to the astrological conjunction. In the third face of each sign the constituent pieces must part ways, a process described in alchemy by the maxim "Solve"—separation.

The order described may seem strange to alchemists, for the process of the art is first to divide "solve" and then to recombine "coagula." Yet it is perfectly sensible, for the movement of planets through the decans is a natural process, and nature first combines elements into a unity, such as a human life, and then the pieces of that unity are slowly drawn apart, as in death. It is alchemy's genius to reverse nature's process to achieve what would otherwise not come to pass.

As the signs of the zodiac already are assigned modes, each decan thus represents a secondary level of mode. The sign Aries, for example, is considered cardinal, but the second decan of Aries is fixed. Thus the second face of Aries represents a fixed phase of a cardinal process. By multiplying the language of astrology in this way, the decans take on greater detail. Furthermore, several particularly intriguing instances arise wherein the modal qualities are doubled in intensity.

The first decans of the cardinal signs, Aries, Libra, Cancer and Capricorn, are all doubly cardinal and each thus contains a profound initiating force. As these decans overlap with the 10 days following an equinox or solstice, this is in no way surprising, for they initiate not merely a month, but an entire season.

The middle decan of the fixed signs, Taurus, Scorpio, Leo and Aquarius are all twice fixed, and represent the sturdiest and most enduring energies within the decanic array. It is thus no surprise they coincide with the middle of each season, when its character is the most inflexible. The cross-quarter holidays, sometimes celebrated as Beltane, Lughnasa, Saimhain and Imbolc, take place within these ultra-fixed decans.

Finally, the third faces of the mutable signs—Pisces, Virgo, Gemini and Sagittarius—are doubly mutable. These decans all take place in the 10 days leading up to an equinox or solstice, and their character is always sacrificial, for the season itself dies in these decans.

## Appendix II: Decanic Magic

THE best way to work with the decans is to observe their power directly. One means of study is careful and consistent observation of the planets' movement through the decans and what effects they bring forth. Both natal charts and the ever revolving sequence of the heavens are suitable subjects.

The second component of study is the practice of creating images which attract and conduct the power of the decans. To this end, this section touches briefly upon the magical use of the decans in certain classes of magical operations. It is not the intent of this section, nor this book, to school one in the entire art of planetary magic, as that is the province of teachers and tomes beyond this. Nonetheless, some guidelines and theory are presented here to be of guidance to the aspirant.

### MORALITY AND MAGIC

THERE are many who hold that the use of magic for anything other than the increase of personal wisdom is immoral or otherwise contrary to the will of the universe. This book alludes to many formulae which, if performed correctly, will alter one's trajectory through their environment.

Despite Puritanical efforts to simplify it into black and white, the karmic issues surrounding magic are as complex, if not more so, than those that surround any other part of life. The considerations which bear upon magic are those that encircle any question about the right use of power.

Given life's many situations, it is impossible to say what actions will be in accord with the Tao and which will not. Even blessings can run contrary to the deepest currents. We float on the surface, and must use our best judgment about what the correct course of action is.

Many potentially harmful formulae are included in the delineation of the decans. This has not been done to increase the violence present in our already conflicted human realm, but for a pair of important reasons. The first is accuracy, in that in many cases a certain pairing of planet and decan will yield destructive and unpleasant results. To fail to report them would be to give an inaccurate idea of the character of their power. The second reason is to give adequate warning of those combinations which are of a generally toxic character. In many texts, magic is referred to as an experimental art,

and few statements could be closer to the truth. Bravery is necessary, yes, but so is caution. Thus have certain noxious combinations been labeled as such, so that fewer laboratories are subject to their resultant explosions.

Deep ethical questions have never been solved by a book's commandments, and so this volume leaves them in the hands of the capable spiritual adults for whom it was written.

#### THE ALCHEMICAL STRUCTURE OF TALISMAN-CRAFT

THOUGH there are numerous texts which explain the nature of talisman creation, the process can be understood very simply with recourse to the language of alchemy. Alchemy posits that all things consist of three identifiable potions. The first is the body, called the Salt. The second is the soul, or energy, called the Mercury. The third is the animating spirit, or Sulphur.

The animating spirit is considered to be anchored to the body by means of the soul, or energy. This is considered to be true not only of human beings, but also of all animals, plants and even stones.

Although simple, it is not untrue to regard the creation of a talisman as the simple task of bringing the spirit (Sulphur) to inhabit the body (Salt) of the talisman. The spirit of the talisman is the active force called down to inhabit the talisman.

For the purposes of the operations suggested in this book, these are astral spirits, those whose nature is of the planets and the decans. The Sulphur is thus covered by the selection of an appropriate time, and the effective conjuration or call of the planetary or decanic spirit.

The body of the talisman, or the Salt, must be of an appropriate nature to receive the spirit called into it. Thus do we have the correspondence tables between stones, metals, plants, animals and the heavens above. The body of the talisman must consist of the appropriate material or combination of materials.

Yet there remains the matter of connecting the Spirit and the Body, the Sulphur and the Salt. This is where the connecting energy, called the Mercury, comes into play. The Mercury's role is as a bridge between the Spirit and the Body, allowing for their permanent conjunction. In the case of the operations suggested in this book, the proper incenses with which to suffumigate the talisman, in part play the role of the Mercury, as might a specially prepared oil.

Yet much of the power that brings spirit and matter together is the mind of the operator themselves, for it is their energy, intention and willpower that are at the heart of every operation.

#### THE IMAGE TO BE IMPRESSED

THE image to be etched, painted or otherwise impressed on the substance of the talisman is combination of the scenario depicted in each decan and the nature of the planet activating the decan.

Suggestions for the images of the planets as they should be drawn or impressed into a decanic talisman follow. While the images suggested will suffice, many other options exist. A survey of the traditional sources of image magic will make other options known. The practitioner would also be foolish to neglect their own vision, for a study of the history of the decans shows that they easily impregnate the engaged mind with images. The scenes which arise from right contemplation are always superior in practice, but such visionary work is inconsistent, and when inspiration fails, the work of others is more than adequate to accomplish most purposes.

#### SATURN

SATURN'S mastery is over the organization of form. His power is to create, test and destroy solid arrangements. The species of practical magical works which are allotted to him are bindings. Bindings are a wide category, and contain negative bindings, which prevent someone from a certain category of act, and positive bindings, which compel someone toward an action. Bindings also include all oaths, promises, obligations. Bindings restrict possible actions, for good or ill. They often represent a simple way to prevent harm from happening, such as tying a dog to a tree in order to keep it from running into traffic. Though often spoken of in terms of power over others, the most important fetters are those we shackle ourselves in.

When one's goal is to draw upon the power of Saturn in a particular face, one should substitute the image of an old man for the central figure. Saturn is most often depicted with a scythe and an hour glass, though many representations of the slow planet in alchemical texts show him with a crutch or prosthetic leg.

## JUPITER

JUPITER'S power is to expand and uplift both the spiritual and material strata of one's life. The type of operation most properly allotted to him is thus that of the blessing. A blessing or benediction is the gift of a particular type of energy. Such boons will manifest according to the position and condition of Jupiter, as well as the will and desire of the recipient.

When one wishes to attract the potency of Jupiter in a decan, the main figure in the decan should be replaced by a magnanimous one, bearing with him with the implements of rule through wisdom. Jupiter has been identified with religious or spiritual leaders in many cultures. The symbols of such rule thus vary according to the cultural palette. For those inclined toward classical sources, a simple representation of Zeus clasping the thunderbolt will often suffice.

## MARS

MARS has long been depicted as war-like, his tools weapons and armor. Mars has a special place in conflict, and his power can be directed in an attack as well as to fortify one against attack. The operations natural to his sphere are thus both the curse and the fortification.

If one wishes to gain the potency of Mars in a specific decan, the primary figure should be rendered as armed and armored, strong, fierce and capable of both defense and attack. Though a variety of arms can show Mars' potency, the Greek pairing of spear and shield is both concise and apt.

## SUN

THE Sun's power is both central and radiant. Sol enlightens and invigorates the matters to which his light is directed. Works of illumination and those to gain and direct attention are thus most natural to him.

To attract the power of the Sun in a particular face, garb the central figure in the raiment of Sol. The Sun is sometimes depicted as an idealized, mature man, but is also often imaged as a radiant child or young man, as in the case of Apollo. The golden crown and the bow and arrow are both appropriate tools for the figure to clasp.

## VENUS

VENUS engenders bonds of love and affection. Works of attraction are therefore natural to her sphere, as are glammers, which draw the mind toward those features which will offer an intended impression.

To draw the potency of Venus in a given decan, make the central figure an attractive woman. Equip her with a mirror, for she delights in images, and a flower or piece of fruit.

## MERCURY

MERCURY has power over the pathways which run through the physical and metaphysical worlds. Charms for safe travel as well works of divination are both suited to his power.

To attract the power of Mercury in a particular decan, make the primary figure an androgynous male figure, holding the Caduceus, winged helmet and winged shoes of Hermes. If desired, paper and a quill may replace the Caduceus.

## MOON

THE Moon's power, like her appearance in the sky, is two fold. The waxing Moon offers the power of increase, and aids in works of manifestation. Meanwhile, the waning Moon aids in works of dissolution.

To draw the potency of the waxing Moon in a given face, make the central character a mature female, with ample hips and bust. Grant her a headdress with the lunar crown. For the waning Moon, the woman should be old, and thin of frame, yet still outfitted with a lunar headdress.

## THE PROPER CONFIGURATION OF THE HEAVENS

IT is impossible to teach all of the factors which one must consider in electing an ideal chart for work with a decan, as such rules encompass virtually the entire corpus of traditional astrology. There are, however, certain guide-



lines which, if used in concert with a knowledge of astrology's fundamentals and intuition, will provide success in most cases.

A set of rules for picking the proper time to create a decanic talisman are described in the *Picatrix*. First, the planet which rules the decan must be placed in it. Then the image must be inscribed under the authority of the Sun. You can either wait until the Sun is in an aspect with the decan-ruling planet, or impress the figure when the Sun rises on the day and hour of said planet. Although the Sun's power is considered vital for the creation of decanic talismans, it is important that Sol is not too close to the planet. If the planet is too close to the Sun, it will diminish the power of the work.

The *Picatrix* uses the descending order method to determine planetary rulership in one section, and then discusses the useful talismans which the Indians make using the triplicity method in a subsequent section. Both of these provide reliable results.

As the content of this book suggests, one is not limited to the planets which are considered to rule the decans. These works are, however, outside of the tradition as recorded, and should only be attempted after the better-documented experiments recorded in the *Picatrix*. For projects of this type, the same electional protocol described above should suffice.

In all cases, the figure of the heavens should be scrutinized in order to ascertain whether other factors will strengthen or impede the talisman.

First, make sure that the planet which occupies the decan is not applying to an aspect with either of the traditional malefics, Mars and Saturn. If the applying aspect is a square, opposition or conjunction, then crafting a talismanic image will be fruitless, or otherwise corrupted. Some of the planets can tolerate a sextile or trine with Mars and Saturn, but in most cases this will still badly damage the quality of the talisman.

When the planet in the decan in question shares a sign with an unfavorable body, such as Mars or Saturn, this is also considered an impediment. Planets in the same sign are considered to have their powers intermingled, even if they are separated by some distance.

Though not a planet, the South Node of the Moon is considered to be destructive in nature, and will interfere with the work considerably if present in the decan. Other aspects to the South Node can be safely ignored. Of the more recently discovered bodies, Pluto can be safely considered a malefic, and aspects with the small, dark outlier should be avoided. Uranus and Neptune sit safely between the category of malefic and benefic. Unless one un-

derstands their effects clearly, applying aspects to them should be avoided.

The aforementioned rules concerning the malefics are true given that the work in question is to create a favorable talisman. If the intention of the work is create a beacon for misfortune, these recommendations may be ignored, or even reversed.

It is favorable for a planet to be applying to an aspect to one of the benefics, Venus and Jupiter. Even a hard aspect is not considered to be damaging, though it will be less favorable than a trine or sextile.

In that a talisman is a work of manifestation, it is necessary to have the Moon's cooperation. A conjunction, sextile or trine from a waxing Moon to the planet in the decan in question is ideal. A square or opposition is less favorable, but not prohibitive.

Pick a time when the planet in the decan is either rising or at the zenith of the sky. Astrologically, this means placing the planet near the Ascendant or Midheaven. Ideally, this is coordinated with the planet's planetary day and hour. Both of these factors are used to ensure the strength of the talisman. Failing to observe them will result in a less robust work.

It is important to note that some of these rules are ways to strengthen the talisman, while others are observed so that contrary influences are not incorporated into it. Having a weak but functional talisman is acceptable, but creating one with harmful side effects is worse than having nothing at all.

As a general rule, the more permanent one's work is, the more careful one should be with the pattern one earths. Permanent, worn talismans, such as rings or other jewelry, are to be created under very strict alignments. Meanwhile, for single workings, such as planetary petitions or personal rites, the rules are considerably less strict, and the ramifications of miscalculation are less pronounced.

## THE SUBSTANCE

THE third essential factor in the creation of a decanic talisman is the substance upon which the image is placed. The nature of this substance is dependent upon the nature of the talisman. For metallic talismans, traditional correspondences between the planets and metals should be used, when possible. If one wishes to make a ring or a piece of jewelry, a stone which corresponds with the operating planet should be obtained a well.

For many purposes, especially that of one's early experiments in the art, paper talismans are preferable, for they are more easily destroyed if they go awry or have achieved their purpose. The finest parchment should be obtained, or better yet the treated skin of animal with an important correspondence to the planet and decan in question.

For those talismans which are drawn or painted, the content of the ink or paint is an important part of the substance of the talisman, and care should be taken to utilize colors which are most appropriate to the work. Special inks created for ritual purposes are ideal, as are paints which contain vegetable and mineral compounds associated with the operating planet's function. Plant or animal matter of a resonant nature may also be powdered and mixed into the paint in order to increase its efficacy.

If one's operation is not a talisman, but instead a petition, offerings of the associated plants and animals, especially in the form of prepared food, are desirable. In all cases, appropriate incenses increase the potency of the operation, and are considered by some traditional sources to be of irreplaceable value in consecrating a talisman.



## TABLES OF CORRESPONDENCE

TABLE 1. Primary Planetary Rulership Schemata

	DESCENDING	TRIPPLICITY/PARASARA
Aries 1	Mars	Mars
2	Sun	Sun
3	Venus	Jupiter
Taurus 1	Mercury	Venus
2	Moon	Mercury
3	Saturn	Saturn
Gemini 1	Jupiter	Mercury
2	Mars	Venus
3	Sun	Saturn
Cancer 1	Venus	Moon
2	Mercury	Mars
3	Moon	Jupiter
Leo 1	Saturn	Sun
2	Jupiter	Jupiter
3	Mars	Mars
Virgo 1	Sun	Mercury

	DESCENDING	TRIPPLICITY/PARASARA
2	Venus	Saturn
3	Mercury	Venus
Libra 1	Moon	Venus
2	Saturn	Saturn
3	Jupiter	Mercury
Scorpio 1	Mars	Mars
2	Sun	Jupiter
3	Venus	Moon
Sagittarius 1	Mercury	Jupiter
2	Moon	Mars
3	Saturn	Sun
Capricorn 1	Jupiter	Saturn
2	Mars	Venus
3	Sun	Mercury
Aquarius 1	Venus	Saturn
2	Mercury	Mercury
3	Moon	Venus
Pisces 1	Saturn	Jupiter
2	Jupiter	Moon
3	Mars	Mars

TABLE 2. Alternate Planetary Rulership Schemata

DECAN	MANILIUS/ PARIVRITTI-TRAYA	SOMANATH	JAGGANATH
Aries I	Aries-Mars	Aries-Mars	Mars
Aries II	Taurus-Venus	Taurus-Venus	Sun
Aries III	Gemini-Mercury	Gemini-Mercury	Jupiter
Taurus I	Cancer-Moon	Pisces-Jupiter	Saturn
Taurus II	Leo-Sun	Aquarius-Saturn	Venus
Taurus III	Virgo-Mercury	Capricorn-Saturn	Mercury
Gemini I	Libra-Venus	Cancer-Moon	Venus
Gemini II	Scorpio-Mars	Leo-Sun	Saturn
Gemini III	Sagittarius-Jupiter	Virgo-Mercury	Mercury
Cancer I	Capricorn-Saturn	Sagittarius-Jupiter	Moon
Cancer II	Aquarius-Saturn	Scorpio-Mars	Mars
Cancer III	Pisces-Jupiter	Libra-Venus	Jupiter
Leo I	Aries-Mars	Libra-Venus	Mars
Leo II	Taurus-Venus	Scorpio-Mars	Sun
Leo III	Gemini-Mercury	Sagittarius-Jupiter	Jupiter
Virgo I	Cancer-Moon	Virgo-Mercury	Saturn
Virgo II	Leo-Sun	Leo-Sun	Venus
Virgo III	Virgo-Mercury	Cancer-Moon	Mars
Libra I	Libra-Venus	Capricorn-Saturn	Venus
Libra II	Scorpio-Mars	Aquarius-Saturn	Saturn

DECAN	MANILIUS/ PARIVRITTI-TRAYA	SOMANATH	JAGGANATH
Libra III	Sagittarius-Jupiter	Pisces-Jupiter	Mercury
Scorpio I	Capricorn-Saturn	Gemini-Mercury	Moon
Scorpio II	Aquarius-Saturn	Taurus-Venus	Mars
Scorpio III	Pisces-Jupiter	Aries-Mars	Jupiter
Sagittarius I	Aries-Mars	Aries-Mars	Mars
Sagittarius II	Taurus-Venus	Taurus-Venus	Sun
Sagittarius III	Gemini-Mercury	Gemini-Mercury	Jupiter
Capricorn I	Cancer-Moon	Pisces-Jupiter	Saturn
Capricorn II	Leo-Sun	Aquarius-Saturn	Venus
Capricorn III	Virgo-Mercury	Capricorn-Saturn	Mercury
Aquarius I	Libra-Venus	Cancer-Moon	Venus
Aquarius II	Scorpio-Mars	Leo-Sun	Saturn
Aquarius III	Sagittarius-Jupiter	Virgo-Mercury	Mercury
Pisces I	Capricorn-Saturn	Sagittarius-Jupiter	Moon
Pisces II	Aquarius-Saturn	Scorpio-Mars	Mars
Pisces III	Pisces-Jupiter	Libra-Venus	Jupiter

TABLE 3. Modes of the Decans

	ELEMENT	MODE OF THE SIGN	MODE OF THE DECAN
Aries 1	Fire	Cardinal/Coagula	Cardinal/Coagula



	ELEMENT	MODE OF THE SIGN	MODE OF THE DECAN
2	Fire	Cardinal/Coagula	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Fire	Cardinal/Coagula	Mutable/Solve
Taurus 1	Earth	Fixed/Conjunctio	Cardinal/Coagula
2	Earth	Fixed/Conjunctio	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Earth	Fixed/Conjunctio	Mutable/Solve
Gemini 1	Air	Mutable/Solve	Cardinal/Coagula
2	Air	Mutable/Solve	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Air	Mutable/Solve	Mutable/Solve
Cancer 1	Water	Cardinal/Coagula	Cardinal/Coagula
2	Water	Cardinal/Coagula	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Water	Cardinal/Coagula	Mutable/Solve
Leo 1	Fire	Fixed/Conjunctio	Cardinal/Coagula
2	Fire	Fixed/Conjunctio	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Fire	Fixed/Conjunctio	Mutable/Solve
Virgo 1	Earth	Mutable/Solve	Cardinal/Coagula
2	Earth	Mutable/Solve	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Earth	Mutable/Solve	Mutable/Solve
Libra 1	Air	Cardinal/Coagula	Cardinal/Coagula
2	Air	Cardinal/Coagula	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Air	Cardinal/Coagula	Mutable/Solve
Scorpio 1	Water	Fixed/Conjunctio	Cardinal/Coagula

	ELEMENT	MODE OF THE SIGN	MODE OF THE DECAN
2	Water	Fixed/Conjunctio	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Water	Fixed/Conjunctio	Mutable/Solve
Sagittarius 1	Fire	Mutable/Solve	Cardinal/Coagula
2	Fire	Mutable/Solve	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Fire	Mutable/Solve	Mutable/Solve
Capricorn 1	Earth	Cardinal/Coagula	Cardinal/Conjunctio
2	Earth	Cardinal/Coagula	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Earth	Cardinal/Coagula	Mutable/Solve
Aquarius 1	Air	Fixed/Conjunctio	Cardinal/Coagula
2	Air	Fixed/Conjunctio	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Air	Fixed/Conjunctio	Mutable/Solve
Pisces 1	Water	Mutable/Solve	Cardinal/Coagula
2	Water	Mutable/Solve	Fixed/Conjunctio
3	Water	Mutable/Solve	Mutable/Solve

TABLE 4. Gods and Spirits from *The 36 Airts of the Zodiac*

DECAN	GOD/SPIRIT
Aries I	Aidoneus
Aries II	Persephone
Aries III	Eros
Taurus I	Charis

DECAN	GOD/SPIRIT
Taurus II	Horai
Taurus III	Litai
Gemini I	Tethus
Gemini II	Kubele
Gemini III	Praxidike
Cancer I	Nike
Cancer II	Herakles
Cancer III	Hecate
Leo I	Hephaistos
Leo II	Isis
Leo III	Serapis
Virgo I	Themis
Virgo II	Moirai
Virgo III	Hestia
Libra I	Erinus
Libra II	Kairos
Libra III	Nemesis
Scorpio I	Numphai
Scorpio II	Leto
Scorpio III	Kairos
Sagittarius I	Loimos
Sagittarius II	Kore

DECAN	GOD/SPIRIT
Sagittarius III	Anangke
Capricorn I	Asklepios
Capricorn II	Hugleia
Capricorn III	Tolma
Aquarius I	Dike
Aquarius II	Phobos
Aquarius III	Osiris
Pisces I	Okeanos
Pisces II	Dolos
Pisces III	Elpis

TABLE 5. Names of Spirits from *Apotelesmatics* and *Liber Hermetis*

DECAN	HEPHAISTIO	LIBER HERMETIS	IMAGE IN LIBER HERMETIS
Aries 1	Chontare	Aulathamas	It is an armed sign, standing, upright, walking, having the likeness of a man, standing on feet like claws, and holding above his head a double-sided battle-axe with both hands.
Aries 2	Chontachre	Sabaoth	It has a two headed face and a lotus of the kings open on its head. In the compass of the lotus there re stars the splendor of gold. He has also in his right hand a wter jug that is called life, in his left a scepter the extremity of which is bifurcated. This decan is clothed in linen and he treads under both his feet a tortoise entirely covered with a net.

DECAN	HEPHAISTIO	LIBER HERMETIS	IMAGE IN LIBER HERMETIS
Aries 3	Siket	Disornafias	It is like a woman, erect, adorned with linen tied with gold strings tinted a dark rose colour. She has a royal gold (crown) on her head. In the middle of her belly there are belly emeralds. She is holding a four-headed serpent on top of the stff. The two heads in the middle are to one side and the (other) to are to the opposite side.
Taurus 1	Choou	Jaus	It has the whole body of the buried Osiris, adorned with gold and dark tie-strings. It has the head of a bull and a queen's crown and two elephant's trunks. In the middle of the horns stands the goddess herself.
Taurus 2	Ero	Sarnatois	Its image is a man, erect, having tightly curled hair on both sides of his head. On his chin there is a growing of fine hairs (and) on his face there is a beard hanging down to his neck from both parts of his chin.
Taurus 3	Hrombromare	Erchmubris	It is standing like Saturn with his feet together adorned with rose-coloured armor. All of its body is human but its head is that of a pig.
Gemini 1	Thosolk	Manuchos	It is an armed man having an ass's face, holding a sword in his right hand.
Gemini 2	Ouare	Samurois	It has a double face. It is walking. It is armed. In its left hand it is holding a bow and arrows and with bothits feet it treads upon hares.
Gemini 3	Phouori	Azuel	It has the beautiful face of Isis, having hair moves every which way.
Cancer 1	Sothis	Seneptois	It has the form of a serpent joined with the face of a dog. In the tail however a heart like a pine (cone?). It has half of its tailed turned down and from either part of the side of the heart slender serpents above the dog's head. This image much analogy, which we will attempt to solve.

DECAN	HEPHAISTIO	LIBER HERMETIS	IMAGE IN LIBER HERMETIS
Cancer 2	Sit	Somachalmals	It has the body of a vulture, but the face of Isis. IT is the bearing the winged queen's crown. It is erect on two feet (with) greaves having wings.
Cancer 3	Chnoumis	Charmine	In its representation it has two round heads the right...and the left one of Anubis... namely the waxen images of the Moon and Juno. In the middle between the two goddesses is a dragon having four heads. Two of its heads are held aloft and two are bent this way and that towards a pine (tree?). They are rather bigger indeed than she (is).
Leo 1	Charchnoumis	Zoloias	It is a great serpent with the form of a lion having solar rays encircling its head.
Leo 2	Epe	Zachor	No description
Leo 3	Phoupe	Frich	It is a man with the likeness of a crocodile.
Virgo 1	Tom	Zamendres	It is a serpent put together awry. Its head is the likeness of the Moon.
Virgo 2	Ouestebkot	Magois	It is a man standing, girded below from the wist all the way to the hollows of his feet, having four wings- two turned back and two on his breast. It has four Ibis heads having an iron beak.
Virgo 3	Aphoso	Michulais	It is like a mummy, its whole body is like one who has been buried.
Libra 1	Souchoe	Psineus	There are two images, erect, having scorpions under their feet. Their hands are hanging down to their thighs. In their rights they are holding two wter jugs, in the middle of which there are two fine pipes through which water is poured out. There are regal things on their heads.

DECAN	HEPHAISTIO	LIBER HERMETIS	IMAGE IN LIBER HERMETIS
Libra 2	Ptechout	Chusthis	In the figure, however, it is a certain man, standing over a marsh, leaving off into one with feet joined, completely girded from the breasts all the way to the hollows of the feet in variegated linen, having his head shaven leaving one spot where there is hair.
Libra 3	Chontare	Psamiatois	It is in the appearance of a serpent.
Scorpio 1	Stochnene	Necbeuos	It is in the form of a crab having wings. It is girt in linen from the breast all the way to the hollows of the feet.
Scorpio 2	Sesme	Turmantis	It is a man standing with his feet joined on the back of a scorpion, holding a great serpent with both feet on either side of his breast.
Scorpio 3	Sisieme	Psermes	It has a human body and the form of a he-goat, holding eggs hanging from a thread in both hands.
Sagittarius 1	Hreouo	Clinothois	It is a man having the head of a dog, extending his left hand to the lower part, he holds something sharp. It is however a small weapon with points. He is girt with variegated net all the way to his thighs.
Sagittarius 2	Sesme	Thursois	This (image) stands on a place that is slippery and sloping downward. He has the face of a weasel, but the body of a man.
Sagittarius 3	Komme	Renethis	It has a human likeness
Capricorn 1	Smat	Renpois	It is a certain man without a head. He holds his own head with his right hand, in his left a sword.
Capricorn 2	Sro	Manethois	It has the face of a bull on the body of a man dressed with the skin of a scarab.
Capricorn 3	Isro	Marxois	It is of human likeness.

DECAN	HEPHAISTIO	LIBER HERMETIS	IMAGE IN LIBER HERMETIS
Aquarius 1	Ptiau	Ularis	It is of human appearance having the face of a dog, girt from the breasts all the way to the hollows of the foot.
Aquarius 2	Aue	Luxois	It has a human likeness.
Aquarius 3	Ptebuou	Crauxes	It has a human form.
Pisces 1	Biou	Fambrais	It is a man dressed in dark clothes hving his own face. He is girt with a belt simply.
Pisces 2	Chontare	Flugmois	Mars is standing armed.
Pisces 3	Ptibiou	Piatris	No description.

TABLE 6. Images from the *Yavanajātaka*

DECAN	IMAGE
Aries I	A man garbed in red and having a red complexion, a fierce man whose limbs and hands are wounded who attacks in anger. He bears golden mail and bright arrows, and his hand is upraised with an axe.
Aries II	A pale-hued warrior whose eyes are pitiless to his enemies. He is clothed in white. His head is like an elephant's. He has arrows for weapons, and he knows the purposes of mineral and mercury. His limbs are heavy and hairy.
Aries III	Wears dark blue garments and has a dark blue body. Armed with a club, he is fierce. He has a garland of blue diadems. He is strong with leaps, and his eyeballs are like a bull's. He is like Death in battle.
Taurus I	A black woman, happy as her mind is agitated by sidelong glances. Round her neck she wears a garland full of kadamba-flowers. She shines forth holding an axe in her hand. Her body is bowed down to by cow-herds.
Taurus II	A red-faced woman whose arms and lower lip are also red. She is pre-eminent as she stands on one foot holding a jar. She is always intent on eating and drinking, and delights in gardens and woods.



Taurus III	A woman...with a tender body. She has a bull's hump, and wears a garland bright with campaka-flowers. Her eye-brows are fair, and her girdle hangs to the end of her buttocks.
Gemini I	Carries a bow, and his hand is bright with arrows. He is adorned with a garland of many colours, and his necklace is pendant. The instruments of his craft are prepared. He knows how to use swords and missiles, and he wears a diadem and armour.
Gemini II	A black woman whose girdle is beautiful and whose garments are brightly coloured. She delights in the arts, in singing, and in story-telling. Holding a lyre, she is pleased and delighted. Her brows are lovely, and she is graceful.
Gemini III	Wears red cloths and a red, pendant necklace. He is pale with red limbs, violent and fierce. The tip of his staff is red (with blood). He is the chief of a multitude of men. He bears a sword and missiles.
Cancer I	A woman whose words are beautiful and full of grace. Holding a lotus in her hand, she stands in the water. Pining with love, she is as pale and fair as a campaka-flower. She wears a single white garment.
Cancer II	A girl seated on a snake-throne, having a medium form and beauty. Her nature abounds in politeness and affection. Her body, adorned with jewels, is beautiful, and her garments are of a pale hue.
Cancer III	A woman who is the colour of a dark blue lotus and is pleasing to the eyes. Her upper-garment is silk and (adorned with) bright jewelry. She is barren, but puffed up with pride in her beauty.
Leo I	A belly and a body like a lion's. He is fierce, armed with a sword, and arrogant with his mighty strength. His deeds are terrible and cruel, and he desires spicy food. He has many fingers.
Leo II	A bold woman with loosened hair. She is on a mountain peak, proud in taking away the wealth of others. Terrible, she causes...; her actions are like those of a monkey.
Leo III	A woman whose actions are marvelous and who is cunning in respect to machines and to undertakings involving the arts, business, or jewels. Seated on an ivory throne, she considers the murder of her enemies.
Virgo I	A black man who possesses a subtle knowledge of crafts and who knows the rules of calculating, cleverness, and story-telling. He is attached to beauty and skill, and is determined in his purpose.

Virgo II	A beautiful woman whose limbs are polluted by her menstruation. She loves a man in secret for the sake of a child. She is learned; striving on behalf of the people, she journeys to a foreign country.
Virgo III	A woman who is naturally coquettish and graceful. Her face is smiling, her countenance moon-like. Her one braid of hair is adorned with asoka-flowers, and her steps seem to stumble with intoxication.
Libra I	A man in the market-place with implements of his trade prepared. His limbs are covered with silk and bright ornaments; his body is black and his eyes are beautiful. His places are those where there are gold, merchandise, mines, and treasure.
Libra II	A fair-waisted woman who has learned a little of the crafts. She wears bright garments and a bright, pendant necklace. She is clever in the office of an intermediary (between lovers) for the sake of the bridegroom. Her actions are like those of rogues and cheats.
Libra III	A man about to attack. The tops of his teeth are far apart, and the hair on his body is long...He carries a bow and wears armour and a turban. He engages in the tricks of rogues.
Scorpio I	A blazing man whose staff is fierce to his enemies. His sword is drawn, his armour is of gold; his flames are fanned by anger. He sports with serpents whose poison is sharp.
Scorpio II	A woman with loose hair who is bound with snakes. She is robbed by thieves in the forest. With black body and completely naked she runs swiftly from a bandit, calling out terribly and shrilly.
Scorpio III	A cruel man wearing a golden suit of armour. Standing in a hole, he is clever (in obtaining) treasure and what he desires. He wishes to follow a vow that is broken. He knows how to use weapons, but is tormented, having been robbed by his companions.
Sagittarius I	A man whose bow is drawn and whose speed is as violent as a horse's. He has a knowledge of chariots and weapons, and bears the instruments for the sacrifice. His body is protected by gold, and his ear-rings flash with gold.
Sagittarius II	A woman who is charming, graceful, and beautiful. She is seated on an auspicious, and is pale with a golden-hued body. Opening a golden casket in a heap of jewels, she takes pleasure in distributing (its contents).
Sagittarius III	A bearded man with a black body, clothed in silk and pining with love, he is graceful. On his breast hangs a string of pearls, and a bracelet is on his upper arm. He desires music and perfume.

DECAN	IMAGE
Capricorn I	The colour of collyrium. His teeth are terrible as a crocodile's. He is armed with a staff, and his actions are like those of Time and Death. He stands in the middle of a cemetery with an armour of heavy hair and a strong body.
Capricorn II	A man of blazing splendor whose teeth are dark blue and like a Pisaca's. He is handsome, having bound on his armou, sword and turban (sirastrana). He wanders about constructing river-embankments, tanks, and aqueducts.
Capricorn III	a woman with loose hair, a gaping mouth, and a hanging belly. Her red body is tall and thin. She holds a noose in her hand, and wears a winding-sheet. She delights in injury.
Aquarius I	a man who has dreadful teeth. He knows how to practice magic. His is the colour of a dark cloud, and half of his fair is filthy. His actions are pitiless. Garbed in antelope-skin, he has the nature of one who is not insignificant.
Aquarius II	a man with a shining sword. Half of his hair is tawny. Covered with garlands of skulls, he wears armour. His is the colour of sunset-clouds, and his protruding teeth are fierce. He is covered with the strings of nooses and so forth.
Aquarius III	a man with various weapons wearing a garland of golden Moons. His shape is boar-like, his form frightful. Producing red (sandal-wood?) in his garden (or Mount Malaya), he is an ascetic whose hair is reddish-brown like a monkey's.
Pisces I	a woman with a beautiful body whose eyes are expansive and long. Her body is adorned with silk and gold. She stnds by the Great Sea, which she has crossed in a boat for the sake of a heap of jewels.
Pisces II	a woman dreadful in strife, the foremost one. She is fierce, and has no clothes; her colour is white, red, and black. Her garmens and ornaments are destroyed; desiring clothes, she shouts out.
Pisces III	a woman whose hair has been loosened and who wears ornaments bearing the emblem of the Abhiras. She shrieks and she is frightened. She stands in the water adorned by troops of spirits having the shape of jackals, cats, and boars.

TABLE 7. Images of the Faces in the *Birhat Jakata*

DECAN	QUALITY	IMAGE
Aries I		A man with white cloth around his waist, dark complexion, pretending to protect, fearful red eyes and a lifted axe.

DECAN	QUALITY	IMAGE
Aries II		A woman with red cloth, fond of ornaments and food, pot-belly, horse-face, thirsty and single-footed.
Aries III		A man cruel, skilled in the arts, yellowish, fond of work, unprincipled, with a lifted up stick, angry and covered with purple cloths.
Taurus I		A woman with torn ringlets, pot-belly, burnt cloth, thirsty, fond of food and ornaments.
Taurus II		A man possessing knowledge of lands, grains, cows, arts, ploughing and carts, hungry, sheep faced, dirty clothes and shoulders like the hump of an ox.
Taurus III		A man with a body like that of an elephant, white teeth, legs like that of sarabha*, yellowish color, and clever in capturing sheep and deer.
Gemini I		A female, fond of needle work, handsome, fond of ornamentation, issueless, lifted hands and in menses.
Gemini II	Bird	A man, living in a garden, in armour, with a bow, warlike, armed with weapons, face like that of Garuda, and fond of play, children, ornamentation and wealth.
Gemini III	Armed	A man, adorned, decked with gems, armoured with quiver and bow, skilled in dancing, drumming and arts, and poet.
Cancer I		A man, holding fruits, roots and leaves, elephant bodied, residing on sandal trees in the forest, legs like that of Sarabha*, and horse-necked.
Cancer II		A female worshipped on the head by lotus flowers, with serpents, full blown youth-fullness, living in forests on the branch of phalasa and crying.
Cancer III	Serpent	A man covered with serpents, flat-faced, and crossing the ocean in a boat in search of wife's jewels.
Leo I	Bird	A vulture and a jackal on the Salmali tree, a dog and a man dressed in dirty raiments, leaving father and mother, and crying.
Leo II		A man resembling a horse's body with white garlands on the head, wearing krishnajuna and kambalam, fierce as a lion with a bow in the hand and bent noose.

DECAN	QUALITY	IMAGE
Leo III		A man with a bear's face, acts like those of a monkey, long beard, curbed ringlets and holding a stick, fruit and flesh.
Virgo I		A female with a pot, full of flowers, covering the body with dirty raiments, fond of money and clothes, and going to the home of the preceptor.
Virgo II		A man with a pen in the hand, dark complexion, the head tied round by a cloth, counting gains and expenditure, covered over the body with dense hair and holding a big bow.
Virgo III		A female, yellowish, covered by a white silk cloth, tall, holding a pot and a spoon, going to a temple with great sanctity.
Libra I		A man seated in a ship in the middle of the road, holding balances, clever in weighing and measuring with a small scale for weighing gold, diamonds, and thinking of his capital, and the prices of the articles in the shop.
Libra II	Bird	A man with a vulture's face, hungry and thirsty, holding a pot which is ready to fall and thinking of his wife and children.
Libra III		A man, decked with gems, wearing golden quiver and armour and frightening the animals in the wilderness, resembling a monkey and holding in the hand fruits and fish.
Scorpio I	Serpent	A woman naked and without ornaments, coming from the middle of a great ocean to the shore, dislocated from her original place, the feet bound by serpents and handsome.
Scorpio II	Serpent	A woman fond of home and happiness for her husband's sake and covered by serpents with a body resembling a tortoise and a pot.
Scorpio III		A lion with a broad flat face, resembling a tortoise, frightening dogs, deer, boars and jackals, protecting localities covered with sandal-wood trees.
Sagittarius I		A man with a human face and a horse's body with a body in hand residing in a hermitage, protecting sacred articles and Maharishis.
Sagittarius II		A woman, handsome, with the colour of Champaca or gold, picking up the gems from the ocean and sitting in the Bhadrasana fashion.

DECAN	QUALITY	IMAGE
Sagittarius III		A man with a long beard, complexion like that of Champaca or gold, holding a stick, sitting in a splendid posture and keeping silks and tiger skins.
Capricorn I		A man covered with much hair, teeth like those of a crocodile, body like that of a pig, keeping yokes, nets and bandages, and with a cruel face.
Capricorn II		A woman, skilled in the arts, broad eyes like lotus petals, greenish dark, searching all kinds of articles and wearing iron ear ornaments.
Capricorn III		A man, with a body like that of Kinaras, with a Kambalam, with a quiver arrows and bow, and bearing a pot on the shoulder decked with gems.
Aquarius I		A man with a mind disturbed by oils, wines, water and food being brought to him, with Kambala, silk cloth and deer skin and a face resembling that of a vulture.
Aquarius II		A woman, covered with a dirty cloth in a forest, bearing pots on her head and dragging metals in a burnt cart loaded with cotton trees in it.
Aquarius III		A man dark, with ears covered with long hair, wearing a crown and wandering with pots filling iron, skin, leaves, gum and fruits.
Pisces I		A man decked with ornaments, holding in hand sacrificial vessels, pearls, gems, and conch shells and crossing the ocean in a boat in search of jewels for his wife.
Pisces II		A woman with colour more beautiful than that of Champaka, surrounded by her attendants, and sailing in a boat decked with long flags in search of the coast of the ocean.
Pisces III	Serpent	A man crying in a pit in the forest, naked and covered over his body by serpents and with a mind distracted by thieves and fire.

*\*Sarabha is a mythical animal with 8 legs of which even lions are said to fear.*

*—Brihat Jataka of Varahamihira (505–587 CE).*

TABLE 8. Images from *The Beginning of Wisdom*

DECAN	IBN EZRA
Aries I	A head in the form of a dog with a candle in its left hand and a key in its right hand. Banbakha says it is a Moor; his eyes are black, and his eyebrows are stright, and he is of the giants' race. He is self-laudatory and is wrapped in a large white cloak with a rope girdle on it; he is irascible and stands on his feet.
Aries II	The figure of a women draped in clothes and a mantle, and she has one leg, and she has the form of a horse.
Aries III	A yellow man whose hair is reddish, and he is irascible and contentious, and in his hand are bracelets of wood and a wand, and his clothes are red, and he is a black-smith, and he desires to do good but he cannot.
Taurus I	A woman with hair, who has a son, and who wears clothes partly burnt.
Taurus II	A man that resembles a ram in his face and in his body, who has a wife that resembles an ox. His fingers are like goat's hoofs, and that man is very hot and gluttonous, and does not give his soul any rest. He builds land and drives the oxen to plow and sow.
Taurus III	A man whose feet are white and so are his teeth, which are so long that they can be seen outside his lips. His complexion is reddish and so is his hair, and his body resembles that of an elephant and a lion, and he is not reasonable, and all his thoughts are toward evil, and he is sitting propped up. There also ascends a horse, and a dog, and a small calf.
Gemini I	A beautiful woman standing in the air, and she can sew.
Gemini II	A black man with his head bound in lead, and a weapon in his hand, and an iron helmet of his head, and on the helmet there is a silk crown, and in his hand a bow and arrows. He likes ridicule and mockery, and he walks around in a garden that has trees and flowers, and in his hand scales stones. He strikes them with his hand, and plays music, and picks flowers from the garden.
Gemini III	A man seeking arms who has a bow and a quiver, and in his hand an arrow and clothing and golden ornaments, and he desires to play music and laugh and mock in all sorts of ways.
Cancer I	A handsome young man, wearing clothes, and he has some sickness, and in his face and fingers there is some crookedness, and his body resembles that of a horse and an elephant, and his feet are white, and on his body are hanging ornaments in the shape of trees, and he sits in an orchard that grows fragrant stalk.

Cancer II	A beautiful maiden with pleasant speech, on her head a myrtle crown, in her hand a wooden stick, and she desires wind and music.
Cancer III	A man whose foot resembles that of an animal, and on his body there is an animal, and he intends to enter a ship to go to sea and bring gold and silver to make rings for his wives.
Leo I	A large tree on whose branches there is a dog and a vulture, and a man wearing pretty clothes, though dirty, and he is about to hit his father.
Leo II	A man whose nostrils are fine, on his head there is a shape of a crown of white myrtle, and a bow in his hand. He is fierce like a lion in his anger, and he is wrapped in a cloak that looks like a lion.
Leo III	An ugly black man, laborious, intelligent, with delicacies in his mouth and meat in his hand.
Virgo I	A maiden wrapped in a cloak, and wearing worn out clothes, with a jug in her hand, and she stands in myrtle, and she wants to go to her father's house.
Virgo II	A black man, all covered with hair. On him are three garments, one of leather, the second of silk, and the third is a red mantle, and in his hand an inkwell in order to reckon.
Virgo III	A white woman who is self-laudatory; she is wearing a dyed mantle, her hands are leprous and she is praying to God.
Libra I	A man in a shop in the market with scales in his hand, and he wishes to buy and sell.
Libra II	A man in the form of an eagle, and he is naked and thirsty, and he is about to fly in the air.
Libra III	A man whose face resembles that of a horse, with a bow and arrows in hand.
Scorpio I	A beautiful woman, her body is red and she is eating.
Scorpio II	A woman who has left her house; she is naked and has nothing on and she is entering the sea.
Scorpio III	A dog, and two pigs, and a big leopard with white hair, and various prey animals.



Sagittarius I	A naked man, from his head down to his havel it is the figure of a man, and from the navel down, it is in the shape of a horse, in his hand a bow and arrows, and he is shouting.
Sagittarius II	A beautiful woman with a lot of hair, wearing clothes and earrings in her ear, and in front of her there is an open chest containing golden ornaments.
Sagittarius III	A man whose color of complexion is golden, and in his hand [something that looks] like a wooden earring, and he is covered with a door made of tree bark.
Capricorn I	An irascible black man, his body is like that of a wild boar, with much hair, and his teeth are sharp and long as beams, and he has a cattle goad, and he catches fish.
Capricorn II	A black woman covered with a mantle and she has a horse.
Capricorn III	A beautiful woman, though black, and her hands are skilled in all kinds of work and spinning of silk.
Aquarius I	A black man who is skilled in copper.
Aquarius II	A very black man whose beard is long and in his hand a bow and arrows, and purses that contain precious stones and gold.
Aquarius III	An angry and deceitful black man who has hair in his ear, and on him a crown from the leaves of a tree, and he turns from place to place.
Pisces I	A man wearing beautiful clothes, in his hand an iron instrument, and he is going home.
Pisces II	A beautiful white woman, sitting in a ship at sea, and she wishes to go out on land.
Pisces III	A naked man putting his foot on his belly, in his hand a lance, and he is shouting out of fear of robbers and fire.

TABLE 9: Images from the *Picatrix*

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Aries I	<p>A large and distinguished black mad man with red eyes and an axe in his hand, a white rope wrapped around his waist.</p> <p>A phase of cruelty, aggression, haughtiness, and insolence.</p>	<p>The image of a black man, with a large and restless body, having red eyes and with an axe in his hand, girded in white cloth, and there is great value in this face. This is a face of strength, high rank and wealth without shame.</p>
Aries II	<p>A woman with a red rope and a dress with one leg, probing diligently for dresses, jewelry and children (appears in the third phase?).</p> <p>Which denotes femininity, delicateness, cleanliness, kindness, entertainment, and beauty.</p>	<p>A woman dressed in green clothes, having one leg. This is a face of high rank, nobility, wealth and rulership.</p>
Aries III	<p>An angry reddish man with red hair, unyielding look, holding a sword and a wooden bracelet in his hand, wearing red clothes, skillfull in iron fabrication, and wants to do good but cannot.</p>	<p>A restless man, having in his hands a gold bracelet, wearing red clothing, who wishes to do good but cannot. This is a face of subtlety and subtle mastery and new things and instruments and similar things.</p>
Taurus I	<p>A woman with curly hair and wearing fiery clothes with a son whose clothes look like smoldering embers</p> <p>A phase of planting and cultivation, building and development, ethics and wisdom, as well as dividing land and engineering.</p>	<p>A woman with curly hair, who has one son wearing clothing looking like flame, and she is wearing garments of the same sort. This is a face of plowing and working on the land, of sciences, geometry, geometry, sowing and building.</p>
Taurus II	<p>A man whose body and face look like those of a camel, his nails similar to the hoof of a cow, wearing an old garment, interested in developing land and buildings, and using cows for planting and cultivation.</p> <p>A phase of ability, honor, vice-regency, destruction and oppression of constituency.</p>	<p>A man with a body like a camel, with cow's hooves on his fingers, and he is completely covered with a torn linen cloth. He desires to work the land, sow and build. This is a face of nobility, power and rewarding the people.</p>

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Taurus III	<p>A man whose body and face look like those of a camel, his nails similar to the hoof of a cow, wearing an old garment, interested in developing land and buildings, and using cows for planting and cultivation.</p> <p>A phase of ability, honor, vice-regency, destruction and oppression of constituency.</p>	<p>A man of reddish complexion with large white teeth exposed outside his mouth, and a body like an elephant with long legs; there ascends with him one horse, one dog, and one calf. This is a face of sloth, poverty, misery, and dread.</p>
Gemini I	<p>A beautiful woman, experienced in dressmaking, with two calf and two horses.</p> <p>Recording and accountability, giving and taking, knowledge itself and seeking knowledge.</p>	<p>A beautiful woman, a mistress of stitching, and with her ascend two calves and two horses. This is a face of writing, of computation and number, of giving and taking, and of the sciences.</p>
Gemini II	<p>A man with the face of a griffin tied with a turban, wearing a shield made of lead and armed with a helmet of lead upon his head. He is holding a bow and arrow in his hand.</p> <p>It indicates trudging, motivation, speed, violence and unprofitable haste</p>	<p>A man whose face is like an eagle and his head is covered with linen cloth; he is clothed and protected by a coat of leaden mail, and on his head is iron helmet above which is a silk crown, and in his hand he has a bow and arrows. This is a face of oppression, evils and subtlety.</p>
Gemini III	<p>A man wearing a shield and carrying a bow and its arrow in its case.</p> <p>It indicates overlooking and missing what should be noticed, fun and entertainment and unemployment.</p>	<p>A man clothed in mail, with a bow, arrows, and quiver. This is a face of audacity, honesty, division of labor and consolation.</p>
Cancer I	<p>A man with a curved face and fingers that look like a horse. He has white feet and tree leaves are attached to his body.</p> <p>It indicates wittiness, mindfulness, friendliness, delicacy and cleanliness.</p>	<p>A man whose fingers and head are distorted and slanted, and his body is similar to a horse's body; his feet are white, and he has fig leaves on his body. This is a face of instruction, love, subtlety and mastery.</p>
Cancer II	<p>A beautiful woman longing for pleasure and singing, wearing a wreath made of green basil on her head and holding a rod of nenuphar (water lily) in her hand is longing for pleasure and singing.</p> <p>It denotes entertainment and enjoyment of music as well as grace, honor and wealth.</p>	<p>A woman with a beautiful face, and her head she has a crown of green myrtle, and her hand is the stem of a plant called water lily, and she is singing songs of love and joy. This is face of games, wealth, joy and abundance.</p>

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Cancer III	<p>A man holdin a snake in his hand, havin a foot similar to the foot of a turtle, and possessing golden jewelry.</p> <p>It is a phase of tricks and driving away by force, achieving objectives by fighting, struggle and repulsion.</p>	<p>A celhafe with a snake in his hand, who has golden chains before him. This is a face of running, riding, and acquisition by means of war, lawsuits and conflict.</p>
Leo I	<p>A man wearing dirty clothes along with the image of a cavalryman who looks like a wolf and a dog is looking to the north.</p> <p>A phase of strength, stamina, action, attack and triumph.</p>	<p>A man wearing dirty clothes, and there rises him the image of a rider looking to the north, and his body looks like the body of a bear and the body of a dog. This is a face of strength, generosity and victory.</p>
Leo II	<p>A man wearing a wreath of white basil on his head and holding an arrow in his hand.</p> <p>It indicates heresy, ignorance, perplexity, idleness of idiots, pulling out swords and fighting.</p>	<p>A man who wears a crown of white myrtle on his head, and he has a bow in his hand. This is a face of beauty, riding, and the ascension of a man who is ignorant and base, and this is a face of war and naked swords.</p>
Leo III	<p>An ugly man who looks like a Negro with a fruit and a piece of meat in his mouth and a kettle in his hand.</p> <p>It indicates friendliness, rewards, affection, participation, and harmony.</p>	<p>A man who is old and black and ugly, with fruit and meat in his mouth, and holding a copper jug in his hand. This is a face of love and delight and food trays and health.</p>
Virgo I	<p>A virgin maid wearing an old dress and holding a pomegranate in her hand.</p> <p>It denotes plowing, and planting, grass and plants, buildings and wealth, and righteousness.</p>	<p>A young girl covered with an old woolen cloth, and in her hand is a pomegranate. This is a face of sowing, plowing, the germination of plants, of gathering grapes, and of good living.</p>
Virgo II	<p>A man with a nice color wearing clothes made of animal skins and another made of iron.</p> <p>It is a phase depicting working, making a living, saving, stinginess, niggardliness and depriving others of their rights.</p>	<p>A man of beautiful color, dressed in leather, and over his garment of leather is another garment of iron. This is a face of petitions, requests and gain, tribute and denying justice.</p>
Virgo III	<p>A large white man wrapped in a rope and a woman holding in her hand a black fawn, which is offered by the Magus for sacrifice.</p> <p>It is a phase of old age, weakness, immobility, chronic illness, uprooting trees and the destruction of buildings.</p>	<p>A white man, with a great body, wrapped in white linen, and with him is a woman holding in her hand black oil. This is a face of debility, age, infirmity, sloth, injury to limbs and destruction of people.</p>

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Libra I	<p>A man holding an arrow in his right hand and the picture of an upside down bird in his left hand.</p> <p>It is a phase of legitimacy, justice, fairness, protection of the weak and needy from tyrants and people in powerful positions.</p>	<p>A man with a lance in his right hand, and in his left he holds a bird hanging by its feet. This is a face of justice, truth, good judgment, complete justice for the people and weak persons, and doing good for beggars.</p>
Libra II	<p>A black man leading a wedding.</p> <p>A phase of relaxation, wealth, good living, security, peacefulness and easy living.</p>	<p>A black man, a bridegroom having a joyous journey. This is a face of tranquility, joy, abundance and good living.</p>
Libra III	<p>Man riding a donkey and a predatory animal in front of him.</p> <p>It indicates sinfulness, impudence, sodomy, singing, entertainment and enjoyment.</p>	<p>A man riding a donkey, with a wolf riding in front of him. This is a face of evil works, sodomy, adultery, singing, joys, and flavors.</p>
Scorpio I	<p>A man with an arrow in his right hand and an arrow in his left hand.</p> <p>It indicates honor and glory, cunning and triumph.</p>	<p>A man with a lance in his right hand, and in his left hand he holds the head of a man. This is a face of settlement, sadness, ill will, and hatred.</p>
Scorpio II	<p>A man riding on a camel and holding a Scorpion in his hand.</p> <p>It indicates disgrace, scandal, tragedy, and anger.</p>	<p>A man riding a camel, holding a scorpion in his hand. This is a face of knowledge, modesty, settlement, and of speaking evil of one another.</p>
Scorpio III	<p>The image of a horse and a snake.</p> <p>It indicates sinfulness, impudence and disdainful forced marital sex achieved by subduing and angering.</p>	<p>A horse and a rabbit. This is a face of evil works and flavors, and forcing sex upon unwilling women.</p>
Sagittarius I	<p>Consider the picture of three bodies; the first is red, the second is white, and the third is red.</p> <p>It indicates valor, activity, pleasure, patience and chivalry.</p>	<p>The bodies of three men, and one body is yellow, another is white and the third is red. This is face of heat, heaviness, growth in plains and fields, sustenance and division.</p>
Sagittarius II	<p>A man driving cows, a monkey and a wolf in front of him.</p> <p>It indicates fright, loss, weeping, fear, sadness and violence.</p>	<p>A man leading cows and in front of him he has an ape and a bear. This is a face of fear, lamentations, grief, sadness, misery, and troubles.</p>

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Sagittarius III	<p>A man wearing a cap of gold on his head and killing another man.</p> <p>It indicates taking risks, unwarranted involvement, exerting efforts in disgraceful, shameful and harmful actions.</p>	<p>A man with a cap on his head, who is murdering another man. This is a face of evil desires, adverse and evil effects, and fickleness in these and evil wishes, hatred, dispersion, and evil conduct.</p>
Capricorn I	<p>A man holding a cane in his right hand and a hoop in his left hand.</p> <p>It indicates pleasure, activity, going back and forth, incapability, weakness and humility.</p>	<p>A man with a reed in his right hand and a hoopoe bird in his left. This is a face of happiness, joy, and bringing things to an end that are sluggish, weak, and proceeding poorly.</p>
Capricorn II	<p>A man with a monkey in front of him.</p> <p>This phase delineates seeking what is known but unobtainable.</p>	<p>A man with a common ape in front of him. This is a face of seeking to do what cannot be done and to attain what cannot be.</p>
Capricorn III	<p>A man opening and closing a Qur'an, with the tail of a fish before him.</p> <p>It indicates intensity, desire, monopoly, accumulation and greed.</p>	<p>A man holding a book which he opens and closes, and before him is the tail of a fish. This is a face of wealth and the accumulation of money and increase and embarking in trade and pressing on to a good end.</p>
Aquarius I	<p>A beheaded man holding a peacock.</p> <p>It is the phase of hard and tiring work, poverty, need, few means of subsistence or lack of it.</p>	<p>A man whose head is mutilated and holds a peacock in his hand. This is a face of misery, poverty and slavery.</p>
Aquarius II	<p>A tenacious man who looks like a powerful king.</p> <p>It portrays beauty, nobility, goodness, complete form, complete religion and manhood.</p>	<p>A man who looks like a king, who permits much to himself and abhors what he sees. This is a face of beauty and position, having what is desired, completion, detriment, and debility.</p>
Aquarius III	<p>A beheaded man with an old woman in front of him.</p> <p>This phase denotes ugliness, bad reputation and a scandal.</p>	<p>A man having a mutilated head, and an old woman is with him. This is a face of abundance, accomplishing of will, and of giving offense.</p>
Pisces I	<p>A man with two bodies pointing with his fingers.</p> <p>It demonstrates little attacking with violence, weakness, extensive traveling, suffering, tiring, looking for wealth and earning a living.</p>	<p>A man with two bodies, who looks as though he is giving a gesture of greetings with his hands. This is a face of peace and humility, debility, many journeys, misery, seeking wealth, miserable life.</p>

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Pisces II	An upside down man holding food in his hand. It indicates dignity, inspiration and the capability of dealing with matters of great importance.	A man upside down with his head below and his feet raised up, and in his hand is a tray from which food has been eaten. This is face of great reward, and of strong will in things that are high, serious, and thoughtful.
Pisces III	An evil man with a woman in front of him who has a donkey above her and a bird in her hand. It indicates marital sexual relations, hugging, lust, intimacy, sensuous desire and a tendency to have leisure and relaxation time.	A sad man full of evil thoughts, thinking of deception and treachery, and before him is a woman with a donkey climbing atop her, and in her hand is a bird. This is a face of advancement, and lying with women with a great appetite, and of quiet and seeking rest.

TABLE 10. Images from the *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*

DECAN	IMAGE	POWER
Aries I	A black man, standing and dressed in white and girded, a large body, red eyes, and with great strength and as if angry.	This image signifies and is made for boldness, strength, loftiness, and immodesty.
Aries II	A woman, indeed dressed in red outer garments, and white [garments] beneath them, stretching out her foot.	This image is made for nobility, loftiness of kingdom, and a great dominion.
Aries III	A white man, pale, red hair, and dressed in red, with one hand wearing a golden bracelet and holding forward a staff. His likeness is as if he was restless and angry because he can't perform the good he wishes.	This image confers talent, tameness, joy, and beauty.
Taurus I	A nude man digging or ploughing.	This is useful for planting, ploughing, building, plundering, dividing the earth, and for geometrical arts.
Taurus II	A nude man, holding a key in his hand.	This brings power, nobility, and authority over people.

DECAN	IMAGE	POWER
Taurus III	A man, in whose hand is a serpent and an arrow.	This is the image of necessity and usefulness, and also misery and servitude.
Gemini I	A man, in whose hand is a staff as if serving another.	It brings wisdom, science, and art of numbers, and in which there is no usefulness.
Gemini II	A man, in whose hand is a [shepherd's] pipe, and the other is curved digging the earth.	It signifies infamous and dishonest activities, such as jesters and tricksters, and signifies labors and laborious searches.
Gemini III	A man searching for arms, and a foolish man who holds in his right hand a bird and in the left a flute.	It signifies forgetfulness, anger, boldness, joking, trifling and useless words.
Cancer I	A virgin girl, dressed in pretty clothes, wearing a crown on her head.	It is excellent for sharp senses, subtlety of wit, and love of men.
Cancer II	A man dressed in beautiful clothing, or a man and woman sitting at a table playing.	It brings wealth, cheerfulness, joy and love of women.
Cancer III	A man hunting with a lance and horn summoning dogs for the hunt.	It signifies conflicts with men, pursuing those fleeing, hunting, and occupying things by armies and disputes.
Leo I	A man riding on a lion.	It signifies boldness, violence, cruelty, wickedness, desire, and prolonged labor.
Leo II	A man with his hands raised, with a crown on his head, and the form of a man angry and threatening. In his right hand he has a drawn sword and in the left a round shield.	It has the signification over hidden quarrels, unknown victories, over vile men, and occasions of lawsuits and battles.
Leo III	A young man, in whose hand is a whip, and the face of the man is violent, sad, and ugly.	This signifies love and fellowship and the lowering of oneself for avoiding battle.
Virgo I	The figure of good maiden and man planting seeds.	This is the signification of gathering riches, a good life, ploughing, planting, and plundering.



DECAN	IMAGE	POWER
Virgo II	A black man, wearing skins, having woolen hair, and holding a satchel.	This signifies gain, the accumulation of substance, and for greed.
Virgo III	A white woman and a deaf or old man, leaning on a stick.	This is the signification of weakness, illness, the loss of members, for the destruction of trees, and the plundering of the earth.
Libra I	The form of an angry man, in his hand is a shepherd's pipe, and the form of a man reading a book.	The operation of this is for the justice and help of the poor and weak against the evil and powerful.
Libra II	Two men raging and angry, and a man ornately dressed sitting in a chair.	This has the signification for anger, against evil, and a restful and secure life with an abundance of good.
Libra III	A violent man holding a bow, and before him a nude man and another man with one hand holding a loaf of bread, the other a cup of wine.	This has the signification for impious desire, singing, joking, and gluttony.
Scorpio I	A woman with a good face and condition, and two men beating each other.	The operation of this is for decorum, beauty, for quarrels, ambushes, deceptions, slanders, and destruction.
Scorpio II	A nude man and nude woman, and the man is sitting on the ground, and before him are two dogs biting each other.	The operation of this is for shamelessness, deception, deceit, for sending out evil, and quarrels between men.
Scorpio III	A man bent over his knee, and a woman beating him with a staff.	This is the signification of drunkenness, fornication, passion, violence, and lawsuits.
Sagittarius I	A strong man armed with a coat of mail, holding a drawn sword in his hand.	The operation of this is for boldness, militancy and freedom.
Sagittarius II	A lamenting woman entirely covered with clothing.	The operation of this is for sadness and fear of their body.
Sagittarius III	A man similar to a golden color, or an idle man playing with a staff.	This is the signification in following one's own will and determination, and activities for evil things, quarrels, and horrible things.

DECAN	IMAGE	POWER
Capricorn I	A woman and a black man, bearing full satchels.	The signification of this is for going out and being joyful, for profit and loss by debilities, and for usefulness.
Capricorn II	Two women and a man gazing at a bird flying in the air.	The signification of this is for demanding for what is unable to happen, and for searching for what cannot be known.
Capricorn III	A woman, chaste in body and wise in her work, and a banker gathering money on a table.	This is the signicator for prudent government, and for ambitious and greedy substances.
Aquarius I	A prudent man and the form of a woman spinning.	This is the signification for thinking and working for gain in poverty, and for usefulness.
Aquarius II	A man with a luxurious beard.	It has the signification of intellect, clemency, modesty, freedom, and good morals.
Aquarius III	A black man who is angry.	It has the signification of disclosure, insolence and shamelessness.
Pisces I	A man carrying a burden over his back, and dressed well.	It has the signification of journeys, changing one's place, and anxiety for seeking substance and nourishment.
Pisces II	An ornate woman with a good face.	A nude man or young man, and near them a beautiful maiden, whose head is decorated in flowers.
Pisces III	A nude man or young man, and near them a beautiful maiden, whose head is decorated in flowers.	This is the signification for rest, swiftness, delight, for fornication, and surrounding oneself with women.

TABLE 11. Indian Decanic Talismans, according to the *Picatrix*

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Aries I	War talismans are made in the first durayjan of Aries for Mars. The possessor of this talisman will be triumphant, sheep milk will be clotted and its butter will be spoiled.	By such images they are always victorious in battle, litigation and controversy and gain what they wish, and are never defeated; it can be made an image to hinder the milk of beasts and destroy their butter.
Aries II	Talismans for rulers and sultans are made in the second durayjan of Aries for the Sun. These talismans protect against their harm.	An image for lords and kings, to acquire their love and turn aside their annoyance.
Aries III	Talismans for dealing with judges and jurisprudence, reconciling differences between them are made in the third durayjan of Aries for Jupiter.	An image for officials, deputies, judges of cities and prelates, to place peace and benevolence between them and to reconcile them when they disagree.
Taurus I	Talismans for reconciling the differences between men and women are made in the first durayjan for Venus.	An image is made to place love between man and wife.
Taurus II	Talismans for animosity, impotence and for inflicting conflict, especially between men and woman are made in the second durayjan for Mercury.	An image to cause hostility and , to bind the will and to cause disagreement between women.
Taurus III	Talismans induce woman lose their sexual interest in men and the same for men in women, or to make them ill and to separate them, are made in the third durayjan.	An image to cause hatred and to bind men so they are not able to have sex with women, and conversely to cause women to sicken, and to separate men and women.
Gemini I	Talismans tailored to promote someone losing his mind and becoming deranged are made in the first durayjan of Gemini for Mercury.	An image is made to harm the senses and intellect.
Gemini II	In the second durayjan, a talisman can be made for Venus to return the absentee and the runaway.	An image is made to bring back absent people and to cause fugitives to come back to a place.

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Gemini III	A talisman can be made in the third durayjan for Saturn to spread negative commendations and disclose private secrets of others.	An image is made so that evil things will be spoken of whomever you wish, and so that disgrace will befall them.
Cancer I	A talisman can be made in the first durayjan of Cancer for the Moon to bring rain, and to bring travelers by sea and land home safely.	An image is made so that evil things will be spoken of whomever you wish, and so that disgrace will befall them.
Cancer II	In the second durayjan, a talisman is made for Mars to prevent rain and snow and clouds that come from the sea and to protect against harmful sea creatures.	An image to prevent unwanted rain and snow, and to banish unwanted snakes and wild beasts on land and sea.
Cancer III	In its third durayjan, a talisman is made for Jupiter to ensure the safety of travelers by sea.	An image for those on the sea to escape perils.
Leo I	In the first durajan of Leo, a talisman is made for the Sun to have a ruler raise one's rank, as well as to bring predatory animals to any intended location.	An image to acquire the love and benevolence of lords, and to bring together wolves, bears and wild beasts in any place that you wish.
Leo II	A talisman is made in the second durayjan for Jupiter to keep wild and predatory animals away from cattle and herds.	An image to chase away wolves and bears, so that herds are not harmed.
Leo III	A talisman is made in the third durayjan for Mars to make wild and predatory animals attack any intended town.	An image to bring together wolves, bears and other wild beasts in which-ever city, village or place wish.
Virgo I	In the first durayjan of Virgo, a talisman is made for Mercury for the welfare of writers and to promote what they have on hand.	An image to write well and profit in your business.
Virgo II	In the second durayjan, a talisman is made for Saturn to harm writers.	An image to destroy tools and writing implements.

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Virgo III	A talisman is made in the third durayjan for Venus to reconcile differences between spouses and promote love between them.	An image to cause peace and love between women and their husbands.
Libra I	In the first durayjan of Libra, a talisman is made for Venus to promote excitement, love, and attraction.	You may make an image to weaken the love of a woman, or the contrary.
Libra II	A talisman is made in the second durayjan as well to promote attraction as well.	An image for love according to everything that has been said before.
Libra III	A talisman is made in the third durayjan for Mercury to return a runaway from wherever he may be.	An image for fugitives to return out of whichever place they are.
Scorpio I	In the first durayjan of Scorpio, a talisman is made for Mars to cause scorpions, insects, birds and the like to attack.	An image to bring together tarantulas, snakes and vipers, in whatever place you wish.
Scorpio II	A talisman is made in the second durayjan for Jupiter to prevent rain, scorpions and other insects, birds and the like.	Image to drive away tarantulas, and snakes from whatever place you wish.
Scorpio III	A talisman is made in the third durayjan for the Moon to prevent rain and the harmful effects of the sea.	An image to divert and hinder rains, and to prevent harm from either rains or from the sea.
Sagittarius I	A talisman is made in the first durayjan of Sagittarius for Jupiter in order to bring about love and harmony.	An image for love and benevolence and companionship.
Sagittarius II	A talisman is made in the second durayjan for Mars create excitement and bring shame and disgrace.	An image to bring afflictions and illnesses to whomever you wish.
Sagittarius III	A talisman is made in the third durayjan for the Sun to gain the sympathy of kings against judges, jurisprudence and prominent people.	An image to acquire the love and the grace of kings and superiors.

DECAN	ARABIC PICATRIX	LATIN PICATRIX
Capricorn I	A talisman is made in the first durayjan of Capricorn for Saturn for hunting and for providing a superior quality of goat milk.	An image to hunt birds and beasts, and for the milk of herds to thrive and increase.
Capricorn II	A talisman is made in the second durayjan for Venus to obtain a good quality of all milk, and for accumulating and multiplying bees and birds.	An image to increase the milk of goats, and improve bees, and make them multiply in your area, and to call forth birds in any place you wish.
Capricorn III	A talisman is made in the third durayjan for Mercury to destroy what has been mended by the durayjan planet.	An image to destroy everything contained in the previous faces.
Aquarius I	A talisman is made in the first durayjan of Aquarius for Saturn to gain the love of sheiks, slaves, and agents. Also, a talisman can be made in the same durayjan to bring out and manage treasures.	An image for love and friendship and companionship with the old, whether lords or servants, and to locate and take hold of treasures.
Aquarius II	A talisman is made in the second durayjan for Mercury to promote love between children and youngsters.	An image for love and companionship with the young.
Aquarius III	A talisman is made in the third durayjan for Venus to promote love and attraction to women especially to each other.	An image for love and benevolence from women.
Pisces I	A talisman is made in the first durayjan of Pisces for Jupiter to ensure safety in travelling by sea as well as for fishing in the sea.	An image for fishing in the sea, and a good voyage thereon.
Pisces II	A talisman is made in the second durayjan for the Moon to produce healthy crops, induce rain and attract whales.	An image for the benefit for of plants and fruits and to call forth rain at the necessary time, and for fishes to congregate any place you wish, either in rivers or in the sea.
Pisces III	A talisman is made in the third durayjan for Mars to promote favorable conditions for travelling by land. Other talismans are made to attract hunting animals.	An image for a good journey in military activities and for hunting birds and beasts.

TABLE 12. Table of Images and Perfumes from 777

DECAN	PERFUMES (SOURCE?)	MAGICAL IMAGES
Aries I	Myrtle	A tall, dark, restless man, with keen flamecoloured eyes, bearing a sword.
Aries II	Stammonia	A green-clad woman, with one left bare from the ankle to the knee.
Aries III	Black Pepper	A restless man in scarlet robes, with golden bracelets on his hands and arms.
Taurus I	Costum	A woman with long and beautiful hair, clad in flame-coloured robes.
Taurus II	Codamorns	A man of like figure (to the ascendant), with cloven hoofs like an ox.
Taurus III	Cassia	A swarthy man with white lashes, his body elephantine with long legs; with him, a horse, a stag, and a calf.
Gemini I	Mastick	A beautiful woman with her two horses.
Gemini II	Cinnamon	An eagle-headed man, with a bow and arrow. Wears crowned steel helmet.
Gemini III	Cypress	A man in mail, armoured with bow, arrows, and quiver.
Cancer I	Camphor	A man with distorted face and hards, a horse's body, white feet, and a girdle of leaves.
Cancer II	Succum	A beautiful woman wreathed with myrtle. She holds a lyre and sings of love and gladness.
Cancer III	Anise	A swift-footed person, with a viper in his hand, leading dogs.
Leo I	Olibanum	A man in sordid raiment, with him a nobleman on horse-back, accompanied by bears and dogs.
Leo II	Lyn Balsami	A man crowned with a white myrtle wreath, holding a bow.

DECAN	PERFUMES (SOURCE?)	MAGICAL IMAGES
Leo III	Muces Muscator	A swarthy hairy man, with a drawn sword and shield.
Virgo I	Santal Flav	A virgin clad in linen, with an apple or pomegranate.
Virgo II	Srorus	Tall, fair, large man, with him a woman holding a large black oil jar.
Virgo III	Mastick	An old man leaning on a staff and wrapped in a mantle.
Libra I	Galbanum	A dark man, in his right hand a spear and laurel branch and in his left a book.
Libra II	Bofor	A man, dark, yet delicious of countenance.
Libra III	Mortum	A man riding on an ass, preceded by a wolf.
Scorpio I	Opoponax	A man with a lance in his right hand, in his left a human head.
Scorpio II	Opoponax	A man riding a camel, with a scorpion in his hand.
Scorpio III	Opoponax	A horse and a wolf.
Sagittarius I	Lign-aloes	A man with 3 bodies—1 black, 1 red, 1 white.
Sagittarius II	Foi Lori	A man leading cows, and before him an ape and bear.
Sagittarius III	Gaxisphilium	A man leading another by his hair and slaying him.
Capricorn I	Assafoetida	A man holding in his right hand a javelin and in his left a lapwing.
Capricorn II	Colophonum	A man with an ape running before him.
Capricorn III	Cubel Pepper	A man holding a book which he opens and shuts.
Aquarius I	Euphorbium	A man with bowed head and a bag in his hand.



DECAN	PERFUMES (SOURCE?)	MAGICAL IMAGES
Aquarius II	Stammonia	A man arrayed like a king, looking with pride and conceit on all around him.
Aquarius III	Rhubarb	A small-headed man dressed like a woman, and with him an old man.
Pisces I	Thyme	A man with two bodies, but joining their hand.
Pisces II	Coxium	A grave man pointing to the sky.
Pisces III	Santal Alb	A man of grave and thoughtful face, with a bird in his hand, before him a woman and an ass.

*Note: The majority of these images are like those given in the Latin editions of the Picatrix, though simplified. In some cases, such as Virgo III, the image appears to be drawn from Agrippa. In at least one case, that of Pisces II, there are no precedents for the image given. Furthermore, if you compare Virgo II with the image given in the Latin edition of the Picatrix, you will see that Crowley has taken the image for Virgo III and placed it in Virgo II.*

TABLE 13. Angelic correspondences, from *Book T* and 777

DECAN	ANGELS—777	ANGELS—BOOK T (TRANSLITERATED HEBREW)
Aries I	זזר Zazer	VHVAL, DNYAL
Aries II	בההמי Behahemi	HHSyYH, a'aMMYH
Aries III	ססנדר Satonder	NNAAL, NYThHL
Taurus I	כדמדי Kadamidi	MBHYH, PNYAL
Taurus II	מנחראי Minacharai	NMMYH, YYLAL
Taurus III	יכסגנוץ Yakasaganotz	HRChAL, MTzRAL
Gemini I	סגרש Sagarash	VMBAL, YHHAL
Gemini II	שהדני Shehadani	a'aNVAL, MChYAL
Gemini III	ביתון Bethon	DMBYH, MNQAL

DECAN	ANGELS—777	ANGELS—BOOK T (TRANSLITERATED HEBREW)
Cancer I	מתראש Mathravash	AVa'aAL, ChBVYH
Cancer II	רהדץ Rahadetz	RAHAL, YBMYH
Cancer III	אלינקיר Alinkir	HYYAL, MVMYH
Leo I	לוסנאר Losanahar	VHVVH, YLYAL
Leo II	זחעי Zachí	SYTAL, a'aLMYH
Leo III	סהיבר Sahiber	MHShYH, LLHAL
Virgo I	אננאורה Ananaurah	AKAYH, HB:KHTaL
Virgo II	ראדיה Rayadyah	HZYAL, ALDYH
Virgo III	משפר Mishpar	LAVYH, HHa'aYH
Libra I	טרסני Tarasni	YZLAL, MNHAL
Libra II	סהרנץ Saharnatz	HRYAL, HQMYH
Libra III	שחדר Shachdar	LAVYH, KLYAL
Scorpio I	כמוץ Kamotz	LVVYH, PHLYH
Scorpio II	ננדוהר Nundohar	NLKAL, YYYAL
Scorpio III	ותרודיאל Uthrodíel	MLHAL, ChHVYH
Sagittarius I	מישרת Mishrath	NThHYH, HAAYH
Sagittarius II	והרין Vehrín	YRThAL, ShAHYH
Sagittarius III	אבוהא Aboha	RYYAL, AVMAL
Capricorn I	מסנון Misnim	LKBAL, VShRYH
Capricorn II	יסיסיה Yasyasyah	YChVVYH, LHChYH
Capricorn III	יסגדיברודיאל Yasgedíbarodíel	KVQYH, MNDAL

DECAN	ANGELS—777	ANGELS—BOOK T (TRANSLITERATED HEBREW)
Aquarius I	סספס Saspam	ANYAL, Cha'aMYH
Aquarius II	אבדרון Abdaron	RHa'aAL, YVHL
Aquarius III	גרודיאל Gerodiel	HHHAL, Ma'aKAL
Pisces I	ביהלמי Bihelami	VVLYH, YLHYH
Pisces II	אורון Avron	SALYH, a'aRYAL
Pisces III	סטריון Satrip	a'aShLYH, MYHAL

TABLE 14. Goetic correspondences from 777

DECAN	GOETIC SPIRIT BY DAY	GOETIC SPIRIT BY NIGHT
Aries I	Bael	Phenix
Aries II	Agares	Halphas
Aries III	Vassago	Malphas
Taurus I	Gamigin	Raum
Taurus II	Marbas	Focalor
Taurus III	Valefor	Vepar
Gemini I	Amon	Sabnock
Gemini II	Barbatos	Shax
Gemini III	Paimon	Vine
Cancer I	Buer	Bifrons
Cancer II	Gusoin	Vual
Cancer III	Sitri	Haagenti

DECAN	GOETIC SPIRIT BY DAY	GOETIC SPIRIT BY NIGHT
Leo I	Beleth	Crocell
Leo II	Leraie	Furcas
Leo III	Eligos	Balam
Virgo I	Zepar	Alloces
Virgo II	Botis	Caim
Virgo III	Bathin	Murmur
Libra I	Saleos	Orobas
Libra II	Purson	Gemory
Libra III	Morax	Ose
Scorpio I	Ipos	Auns
Scorpio II	Aim	Orias
Scorpio III	Naberius	Napula
Sagittarius I	Glasya-La Bolas	Zagan
Sagittarius II	Bune	Valac
Sagittarius III	Ronove	Andras
Capricorn I	Berith	Flauros
Capricorn II	Astaroth	Andrealphus
Capricorn III	Forneus	Cemeries
Aquarius I	Foras	Amduscias
Aquarius II	Asmoday	Belial
Aquarius III	Gaap	Decarabia
Pisces I	Furfur	Seer

DECAN	GOETIC SPIRIT BY DAY	GOETIC SPIRIT BY NIGHT
Pisces II	Marchosias	Dantalion
Pisces III	Stolas	Andromalius

TABLE 15. Table of Egyptian Names and Gods from 777

DECAN	EGYPTIAN NAME	(PTOLEMAIC) EGYPTIAN DEITY
Aries I	Assicean	Aroueris
Aries II	Lencher	Anubis
Aries III	Asentacer	Horus
Taurus I	Asicath	Serapis
Taurus II	Virvaso	Helitomenos
Taurus III	Aharph	Apophis
Gemini I	Thesogar	Taautus
Gemini II	Verasua	Cyclops
Gemini III	Tepistosoa	Titan
Cancer I	Sothis	Apoltun
Cancer II	Syth	Hecate
Cancer III	Thuisimis	Mercophta
Leo I	Aphruimis	Typhon
Leo II	Sitlacer	Perseus
Leo III	Phuonidie	Nephthe
Virgo I	Thumis	Isis

DECAN	EGYPTIAN NAME	(PTOLEMAIC) EGYPTIAN DEITY
Virgo II	Thoptius	Pi-Osiris
Virgo III	Aphut	Panotragus
Libra I	Serecuth	Zeuda
Libra II	Aterechinis	Omphtha
Libra III	Arepfen	Arepfen
Scorpio I	Sentacer	Arimanius
Scorpio II	Tepiseuth	Merota
Scorpio III	Senciner	Panotragus
Sagittarius I	Eregbuo	Tolmophtha
Sagittarius II	Sagen	Tomras
Sagittarius III	Chenen	Zeraph
Capricorn I	Themeso	Soda
Capricorn II	Epima	Riruphta
Capricorn III	Homoth	Monuphta
Aquarius I	Oroasoer	Brondeus
Aquarius II	Astiro	Vucula
Aquarius III	Tepisatras	Proteus
Pisces I	Archatapias	Rephan
Pisces II	Thopibui	Sourut
Pisces III	Atembui	Phallophorus

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